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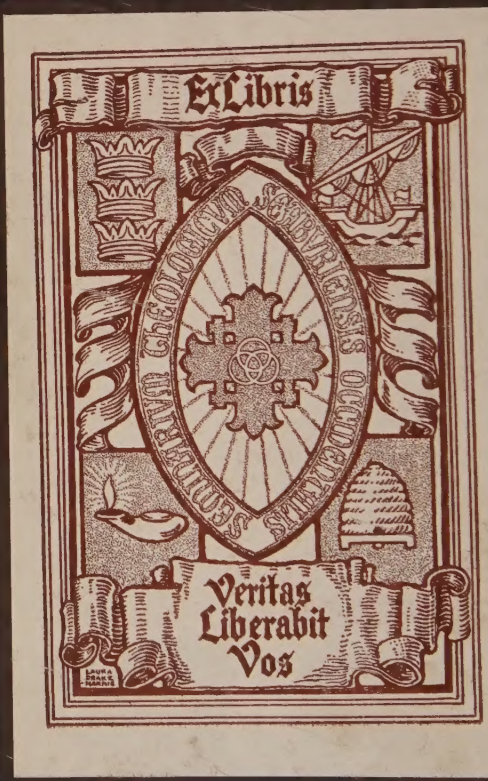
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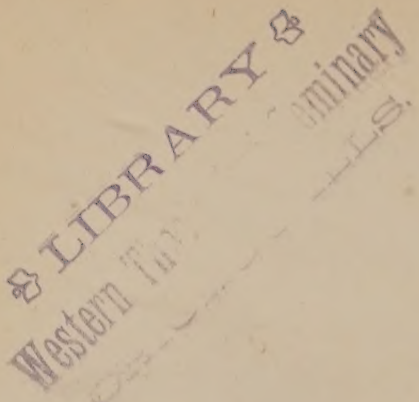

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BY THE
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PREFACE.

THE popular view of history possesses two characteristics: first, it deals in broad generalizations, and marks history out into great Periods; secondly, it is attracted by great individualities, and seizes on certain Men as the representatives of the Periods in which they lived.

Thus Charlemagne stands in the popular view as the representative man of that obscure but very important period in which three elements—the ancient civilization of the Empire of the West, the fresh vigour of the Barbarians who overran it, and the Church—were being fused into the national life of mediæval Europe.

When we come to study the period we find that the process of fusion was very complex, and extended over a long period; and that while we may conveniently accept Charlemagne as the central

and representative figure in this period of history, we must begin far back to trace the gradual changes which led up to him; and if we are rightly to appreciate him and his work we must continue to study the history of the period long after he has passed away from it.

And so in this book it will be found that the actual life of the Emperor Karl occupies only a portion of it, while it has been thought that the popular name of "Charlemagne" may appropriately stand as the title of what is a sketch of his period.

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CHAPTER I.

THE FRANKS.

Description of the Franks—Their inroads into the empire—Their first settlement in Batavia, A.D. 355—Spread as far as the Somme, A.D. 445—Franks in alliance with the Romans.

It was in the troubled reign of Gordian that the Franks made their first inroad into the Roman Empire: a horde of Teutonic giants, with light complexions, fair hair, and "green" eyes; clothed in the spoils of the bear, the urus, the boar, and the wolf, they looked at a distance like a herd of wild beasts. Each man bore in his right hand a long lance, in the left a buckler, in his girdle a two-edged axe, which was their peculiar weapon, and which they either used in hand-to-hand encounters, or hurled from a distance with unerring precision. In migrating to new homes they carried their wives and children, and rude household goods, in rough

waggons with great wheels of solid wood, drawn by oxen. The waggons, ranged in a circle, formed a protection to their camp when needful.

In battle, according to the ancient German custom, they formed themselves into a wedge. At the point of it they placed chosen warriors; each chief was surrounded by the men of his own family. The formidable phalanx advanced with impetuosity, yet with a measured movement which carefully preserved its formation; presenting to the foe the vision of a forest of lances, a crowd of half-naked bodies, half-clad in the skins of wild beasts. A cloud of cavalry similarly clad and armed covered the wings of the phalanx. In charging they uttered a terrible war-cry, made more shrill and dissonant by the application of the edge of the buckler to the mouth. In marching they sang a war-song, in which they exulted over "slaughtered foes, given for food to the wild beasts, and weeping women; and welcomed death in battle as the natural end of life, which brave men meet with a smile." *

Thus they emerged from the German forests, crossed the Rhine upon huge rafts of timber, and burst upon the terrified inhabitants of the peaceful and prosperous province of Gaul; devastating the peaceful country, burning villas, driving off flocks and herds, the country people fleeing before them. Sometimes they would pass in sight of the towns, where the gates were closed and the walls manned by the citizen militia, and leave them unattacked;

* Chateaubriand, "Les Martyrs," chap. vi.

sometimes, in more formidable numbers, they would storm the towns, and carry off the citizens as slaves and their wealth as booty.

Again and again, during two centuries, attracted by the rich prey which the towns and villas of the wealthy provincials offered, they repeated their raids, and again and again the Imperial legions defeated them with great slaughter, and chased the survivors out of the empire. Aurelian defeated them at Mayence in A.D. 242, and drove them into the swamps of Holland. Twelve years after another inroad was punished by the generals of Gallienus. In A.D. 276 they had gained possession of sixty Gallic cities, from which Probus drove them, and, it is said, killed 400,000 of them and their allies. Constantius Chlorus, in A.D. 292, drove the Salian * Franks out of the Batavian Islands of the Lower Rhine. His great son Constantine defeated them in the early years of his reign with great slaughter, carried off two of their kings and thousands of their warriors in triumph to his capital of Treves, and there, in the games in honour of his victory, the famous *Ludi Francici*, gave them to the lions in the amphitheatre.

The year A.D. 355 is a prominent date in the

* The origin of the names Salian and Ripuarian, by which the two great divisions of the Franks are known in history, is obscure. Salian, perhaps, means those who dwelt along the river Yssel, or Sal: the Sicambrian tribe seems to be the leading tribe of this division. The name Ripuarii, or Riparii, it may be suggested with greater probability, denoted those who lived on the bank of the Rhine.—Perry, "The Franks."

history. In that year there was a great and general movement of the Franks along the whole frontier from Strasburg to the sea, and apparently they endeavoured to establish themselves all along the left bank of the river. The Salians then again seized Batavia, and spread into Toxandria, where they firmly established themselves. This was their first permanent settlement on the left bank of the Rhine, and the foundation of the kingdom of Clovis. The Emperor Julian attacked them in A.D. 358, but allowed them to retain their lands on condition of acknowledging themselves subjects of the empire. For the most part they continued faithful allies, and formed a useful barrier against the barbarians beyond them. At this period bodies of Frank auxiliaries were taken into the Imperial service, in which some of their chiefs rose to high rank and great influence.

The Franks gradually spread further and further, until, at the beginning of the fifth century, we find them occupying the left bank of the Rhine as far as Tournai, which then became the chief town of the Salian Franks. The Ripuarians, meanwhile, had been also extending themselves downwards from Andernach, along the middle Rhine, and they gained Cologne about the same time that their Salian brothers reached Tournai.

About the year A.D. 430, when the barbarians were breaking into the empire on every side, we come to the third stage in the westward progress of the Salian Franks. The legendary histories assign

the leadership in the conquests of this period to the fabulous King Pharamond, but there is no evidence of the existence of such a person. The conquest of Cambrai by Clodion, in A.D. 445, is a well-established historical fact, and the conquest of the country as far as the river Somme; for though the Franks suffered a surprise and defeat at the hands of Actius and Majorian, yet at the end of the war they retained possession of their conquests. It is probable that this part of the country was then comparatively desolate, and that its colonization by the Franks did not dispossess any considerable native population.

Clodion died in A.D. 448. Attila appeared in Gaul in A.D. 450. The kingship of the Salian Franks was disputed by two rival princes. The legends call one Merovæus. He appealed to Aetius, the Roman Prefect, for countenance; his rival appealed to Attila. In the great battle of Chalons, Merovæus and his warriors were among the barbarian allies whom Aetius and the Visigothic Theodoric brought into the field; the rival faction of the Salian Franks was among the allies of the Huns. The fate of the great battle, in giving victory to the Roman, gave to Merovæus the kingship of the Salian Franks.

His son Childeric, who succeeded him, was a licentious youth, who, giving way to unbridled passion, and dishonouring the daughters of his chiefs,* was driven into exile. It is a remarkable illustration of the relations between the Romans and the Franks,

* Gregory of Tours, "Historia Francorum," Lib. ii. 12.

that when the Franks thus drove away their hereditary chief, they chose Ægidius, the Prefect of Gaul, as their king.

At the end of eight years, Childeric's friends had prepared the way for his return from exile, and he was restored to his sovereignty. He had spent his years of exile at the court of the King of Thuringia. The grateful Frank seems to have repaid the hospitality of his royal host by gaining the affections of his queen, Basine; for, on his return from exile, Basine fled and followed him. He married her, and Clovis was their son. The remaining fifteen years of the reign of Childeric he was in alliance with Ægidius, in defence of Northern and Central Gaul, against the growing power of the Visigoths of Spain and Aquitaine.

CHAPTER II.

THE SETTLEMENT OF THE BARBARIANS.

Political condition of Gaul on the accession of Clovis—The kingdom of the Franks—The Roman province—The settlements of the barbarians—The Burgundians—The Visigoths—Surrender of Southern Gaul to the Visigoths.

BEFORE we enter upon the eventful reign of Clovis, it will be convenient to consider the condition of Gaul before the commencement of his conquests. It was divided into four, if not five, independent states. First, the Frank dominions; they were divided into the Salian and Ripuarian kingdoms, and these again subdivided according to the Teutonic custom of dividing the possessions of a father among all his sons; but the divisions, being all united in one general annual assembly of the whole people, and usually acting together in great undertakings of general interest, may be regarded as one state. Northern Gaul, from the Somme westward to the Atlantic, from the Channel southward to the Loire, was still nominally a portion of the Roman Empire. It is a question whether the Armoricans (Bretagne),

secluded in their hills and forests, and governed patriarchally by their chiefs, continued to regard the Prefect of Gaul as the head of their government; but, at least, no acts of hostility had clearly defined them as rebels to the empire. Syagrius, the Prefect of Gaul, was of one of the great families of the province; his father Ægidius, and his grandfather Aetius, had filled the same high office before him. Perhaps a more ambitious man might have sought to make of this remnant of the Gallic province what it is sometimes called by historians, the kingdom of Syagrius.

The whole of Central Gaul was divided between the Burgundians and the Visigoths. The Visigoths were bounded on the side of Roman Gaul by the river Loire, and on the east by the Rhone. The Burgundians were bounded on the side of Roman Gaul by the river Marne, and on the west by the Rhone. The south of Gaul, where the Greeks had planted their language and civilization, which still lingered in Marseilles and Arles, had only lately been abandoned by Odoacer and seized by Euric. We should entirely misunderstand the condition of things if we supposed that the Visigoths in the south-west and the Burgundians in the south-east had conquered the people of these districts, seized upon their possessions, and substituted their own government, laws, and institutions, for those of the empire. The actual process by which these barbarians obtained their seats in Gaul, and the conditions under which they held them, are very

curious, very interesting, and must be carefully considered, if the whole history of the subsequent period is to be at all intelligible.

The empire had long ago found out its weakness, in the absence of a warlike population from which armies could be drawn numerous enough and brave enough to defend the frontiers against the increasing pressure of the barbarians, and had begun to adopt the policy of enlisting the barbarians as allies against the barbarians. This was done in two ways. Bodies of barbarians—Goths, Vandals, Franks—were enlisted into the armies as auxiliary troops, remaining under the command of their own patriarchal princes and chiefs, but receiving more or less of the Roman arms and discipline. The commanders of these bodies of mercenaries held a two-fold character. They were usually the hereditary chiefs of their soldiers, and exercised among them not merely the authority of a military commander, but the rule of a native prince. To the empire they were generals in the army, Romans in language and civilization, holding a distinguished social position in right of their princely birth, and often attaining to high office and great influence in the state. The Imperial history of these centuries supplies a long list of Goths and Franks, who became so powerful in troublous times as to hold the fate of the empire in their hands; and in the last days of the Western Empire, their barbarian armies, like the Pretorians of one earlier period and the Legions of another, made and unmade emperors.

Another way in which the policy of the empire had sought to use the valour of the barbarians as a defence, was by planting colonies of them here and there along the frontiers, where they settled and cultivated the soil, and became partially civilized, and were ready to defend their own possessions; and so acted as bulwarks of the empire generally against the inroads of barbarians from without. Aurelian, at the same time that he abandoned the Dacian territory beyond the Danube, planted a colony of Dacians on the hither side of the boundary river, in Mœsia. Probus planted colonies of the Franks and other German tribes along the Rhine and the Danube. Constantine the Great pursued the policy of seeking to conciliate, to civilize—in a word, to Romanize—the barbarians who were in contact with the empire. Valens allowed the Visigoths to cross the Danube, and assigned them lands in Thrace.

These facts must be borne carefully in mind in reading the history of the disruption of the Western Empire. They explain the attitude of the barbarians towards the empire, and the relations of the empire with the barbarians at this period. They explain how it comes to pass that armies of barbarians, obeying no one but their own chiefs, receive the Imperial pay, and control their nominal master. They explain how whole tribes of barbarians come to be peacefully settled, either in one body on the frontiers, or scattered over a province among the Latin inhabitants. And, lastly, they explain how

tribes of barbarians who had invaded the empire and effected forcible settlements, were dealt with on the fiction that they were military colonists and allies of the emperor.

These settlements were the more easily arranged because the barbarians, accustomed to the free life of the field and forest, did not care to inhabit the towns and cities; all they desired was to settle in the open country. On the other hand, the Roman population was chiefly concentrated in the towns and cities, while the lands of the Imperial treasury, lands still unreclaimed, and perhaps sometimes the estates of great proprietors who had been slain, afforded ample means of satisfying the barbarians.

The settlement of the barbarians in Gaul was partly the result of one and partly of the other of these processes.

When Jovinus (A.D. 411) usurped the purple, he engaged certain tribes of Burgundians in his service, and ceded to them settlements in the district known as the first, or Upper Germany; and on the defeat and death of the usurper, Honorius, the lawful emperor, found it expedient to confirm the concession made to the Burgundians. They were a race of comparatively mild disposition, who took quiet possession of the lands allotted to them, without inflicting wanton injury upon the people among whom they were allocated; and they gradually spread over the whole of the two provinces watered by the Saone and the Rhone, which still retain the national appellation of Burgundy.

The history of the Visigothic settlement in Gaul is a longer and more interesting story, and illustrates very fully all the aspects of the relations of the barbarians and the empire. The Visigoths had already, in pursuance of the policy of Constantine, been Christianized and partially civilized, while still in their seats beyond the Danube, when, in the year A.D. 376, pressed by the migration of the Huns from their Scythian deserts, they obtained leave of Valens to seek refuge within the empire. A district was assigned them in Thrace, where large tracts of fertile and uncultivated land afforded them desirable possessions. They still retained their national language and customs, and the hereditary chiefs of their tribes and families still ruled them in peace and commanded them in war. In return, they supplied a body of 40,000 auxiliaries for the service of the state.

At the beginning of the reign of Honorius, Alaric was the commander of the Gothic auxiliaries; a prince of one of the noblest Gothic families, a warrior who had learned the art of war under the great Theodosius. Refused the post to which he thought himself entitled, of the command of the Roman armies, he revolted with his Gothic contingent; and the whole of the Goths of Thrace broke out in rebellion and swelled his forces. It is not our business here to follow his history in detail. Every one knows how he invaded Italy, thrice appeared before the walls of Rome, and the third time gave it up to sack and pillage. After

his death his brother Adolph succeeded him as King of the Goths; and, frankly admitting that it was not possible for the Goths to undertake the task of administering the Roman world, he contented himself with obtaining large concessions from Honorius; married the emperor's sister, Placidia, who was his captive; resumed the title and attitude of an Imperial general; and became one of the most powerful supporters of the Imperial throne. He suppressed the usurpers Jovinus and Sebastian in Gaul; he marched against the mixed multitude of Suevi, Vandals, and Alans, who had invaded Spain. Here he was assassinated. But his successor, Wallia, completed the defeat of the barbarians, and restored Spain to the obedience of Honorius. He and his warriors were rewarded by the grant of possessions in Aquitaine—the country between the Loire, the ocean, and the Pyrenees, whose inhabitants were celebrated among the Gauls for their wealth, their learning, and the politeness of their manners; and the successors of Alaric fixed their royal residence at Thoulouse.

When Odoacer, who had long been virtual master of Italy, and had made and unmade its emperors, at length deposed Augustulus (A.D. 476), and, under the decent pretext of being the representative of the Eastern emperor, exercised openly the power he had long virtually possessed, he sought to secure the new state of things by friendly arrangement with the principal barbarians, who were also interested in the fate of the empire; he con-

ciliated the friendship and support of Euric, king of the Visigoths, by abandoning to him the Roman possessions in the south of Gaul. Arles and Marseilles surrendered to the arms of Euric. Auvergne, where Vercingetorix had made the last stand against the conquests of Cæsar, strong in its volcanic peaks and wooded defiles, and in the spirit of its inhabitants, made a brave resistance, but was at length obliged to submit to the Gothic rule. Euric had been fifteen years the ruler of the Visigoths, and had still another seven years to rule, when (A.D. 481) the death of Childeric the Frank left the boy Clovis, fourteen years of age, as his successor.

CHAPTER III.

ROMAN GAUL.

Social condition of Gaul on the accession of Clovis—Appollinaris Sidonius—A Gallo-Roman villa—A Visigothic king—A Frank chief—Burgundian society—Saxon pirates.

A SURVEY of the social condition of the flourishing province of Gaul, before the beginning of the barbarian settlements in it, would have revealed the following general characteristics. In the cities of the south of Gaul, the refined civilization which the Greeks had planted there still pervaded the language, the dress, the habits of the people. In the north of Gaul the Roman type of civilization had formed its institutions, language, and habits, and had not yet in this northern province deteriorated to such a level of vicious enervation as in Italy itself. Aquitania was specially noted among the Gauls for its high degree of elegant refinement.

In the last chapter we have seen how the Burgundians obtained settlements in the country east of the Rhone, the Visigoths in Aquitaine and the

south, and how the Franks gradually spread from the Rhone to the Somme, leaving North-Central Gaul still under the government of Syagrius. It happens that just at this period of the history—a period otherwise very obscure—we are so fortunate as to have one contemporary writer, who for the period embraced by his history, viz. the period of these barbarian settlements, and for the part of the country over which his personal knowledge extended, viz. the south and west of Gaul, Auvergne and Aquitaine, gives us a series of pictures of society so vivid as to place us in the very presence of the men and events among which he lived.

His own personal history may first be sketched, as in itself a valuable illustration of the history of the time. Caius Sollius Appollinaris Sidonius was of one of the greatest of the Gallo-Roman families of Auvergne. He tells us* that his father, father-in-law, grandfather, and great-grandfather had held office as Prefects of Gaul and of the Pretorium, and Masters of the Palace and of the Soldiers; that is, the highest offices of the state. At the age of twenty he married the daughter of Avitus, the head of another of the greatest of the noble families of Gaul. Six years after this marriage Avitus was raised to the Imperial throne by Ricimer. Sidonius followed his Imperial father-in-law to Rome, and there pronounced the customary poetical panegyric, on the first day of the following year, in presence of the emperor and the senate; and in

* Lib. i. Ep. 3.

recognition of his literary ability a bronze statue was decreed to the young orator in the Forum of Trajan. When Avitus was dethroned by Ricimer, part of Gaul rose in revolt, and Sidonius was involved in the outbreak. He was, however, pardoned by the virtuous Majorian, pronounced at Lyons the poetical eulogium of the magnanimous emperor, was raised to the dignity of count, and held several employments under him. When Majorian in turn was poisoned by Ricimer, Sidonius retired to his country seat of Avitacum, in Auvergne, during the short reign of Severus. But when Severus had been also poisoned, and Anthemius had been placed on the throne, the new emperor sent for Sidonius and made him chief of the senate, prefect of the city, and patrician, and for the third time he pronounced the poetical eulogy of an emperor, on the first day of the year 468. At the end of 471 he quitted the court, and retired to his estate at Avitacum. The see of Clermont becoming vacant, the clergy and people elected their distinguished neighbour as their bishop,* and we find him in friendly correspondence

* The prelates of the fifth century, at least in the most considerable cities, were frequently men of the highest rank, and of great wealth, and often men who had not been trained up as priests, but had filled the first offices in the civil service of the empire. Such at this time were, besides Sidonius, Patiens of Lyons, Avitus of Vienne, and Appollinaris of Valence, the last two grandsons of an emperor. The emperor Avitus, when deposed, accepted a bishopric, which he was not permitted long to enjoy. Glycerius, when deposed, accepted the bishopric of Salona:—it is uncertain whether or not he is identical with the Glycerius who shortly afterwards was Archbishop of Rheims.

with the most noted of the Gallic bishops—Lupus of Troyes, Remigius of Rheims, Patiens of Lyons, and others. It was while Sidonius was their bishop that Auvergne was invaded by Euric the Visigoth (A.D. 474), and Clermont sustained a siege; his brother-in-law Ecdicius, the son of the late Emperor Avitus, and the natural leader of the Auvergnâts, was at the head of the patriotic defence, and the bishop, no doubt, shared in it. The consequence was that when Euric obtained the mastery Sidonius was exiled. But at the end of a year he was allowed to return to his flock, and died among them in the year A.D. 488, the fifty-eighth year of his age, the eighteenth of his episcopate, and the seventh or eighth year of the reign of Clovis.

Besides the three eulogiums which we have mentioned, and which deal with the political events of the times, Sidonius has left us a collection of his letters, written in imitation of those of Cicero and of the younger Pliny, and intended for publication, in which we find those sketches of life and manners which are so charming and so valuable. We gather in general from them that the Visigothic element in the population was much smaller in proportion, and that its introduction into the midst of the Roman population had caused much less disturbance in the conditions of the ancient society, than we should have supposed. Many of the great Gallo-Roman families retain their possessions, or a large portion of them, and still inhabit their luxurious villas. Sidonius describes his own villa at some length.

He has numerous friends with whom he exchanges visits, and whose pleasant hospitalities he describes. He keeps up a considerable literary correspondence, sometimes throws off a *jeu d'esprit* in verse, and altogether gives the impression that the elegant, luxurious Roman life with which we are familiar was still going on in Southern Gaul, as if no Gothic king were keeping his court at Thoulouse, no Gothic garrisons were established here and there throughout the land, and there were no Gothic "guests" quartered upon the estates of the great proprietors. And yet we are continually coming upon indications that the barbarian dominated the political life of this Roman society; the fresh-complexioned, fair-haired, blue-eyed giants, in their barbaric trappings, frequently come upon the scene, and the feelings of the higher classes of the Latins towards them is fully told in a single line—"the barbarians whom we ridicule and despise and fear." * But with these general remarks, and with an occasional note, we will leave the letters of Sidonius to speak for themselves.

In Lib. ii. Ep. 1, he gives a long description, clearly imitated from Pliny, of the villa at Avitacum; an estate dearer to him, he says, as being his wife's possession, than if it had been his own. Behind it rose a high mountain; lower hills on each side left a plateau on which the villa stood, overlooking a lake two miles in length. He describes the bath built at the foot of a cliff covered with wood, so

* Sidonius, Lib. iv. Ep. 15.

that the trees cut for fuel almost fall into the mouth of the furnace which heats the water. The bath-room has a semicircular apse, into which the boiling water pours through leaden pipes. Adjoining is the *Unguentarium*, of the same dimensions. The *Frigidarium* is so large as to rival those of public baths, and is of exact proportions; its roof terminates in a cone, with its four sides covered with tiles. The interior of the room is lined with cement of extreme whiteness. It has no lascivious pictures, no shameless nudities, whose artistic skill is a disgrace to the artist. No actors here, in masks and ridiculous costumes, imitate the trappings of Philistio. No wrestlers and boxers in indecent attitudes. In a word, there is nothing to shock the most pure. Some verses may attract for a moment the attention of those who enter, who, without perhaps caring to read them over again, will not regret having read them once. It is clearly the modest author of the verses who thus speaks of them.

He describes at length the cold bath, with its water conveyed from the mountains, and poured into the piscina through lions' heads so lifelike as almost to startle the spectator. We cannot go through the detailed description of the buildings of the villa, with its summer and winter apartments, and its long corridor, which affords an ambulatory by day, and a sleeping-place for the slaves by night. We will only particularize a small dining-room, with a platform above it, mounted by a broad and convenient stair, where one may in summer enjoy

at the same time the pleasures of the table and the view of the lake. "There it is pleasant to watch the fisherman engaged in his sport; there it is charming to hear at midday the shrill sound of the cicalas, and in the evening the croaking of the frogs, and in the profound silence of the night the voices of swans, geese, fowls; then the caw of rooks saluting thrice the rosy face of the rising dawn; the voice of Philomel warbling among the fruit trees, Progne twittering among the eaves. With these mingles sometimes the sound of the Pan-pipes, with which the watchful Tityruses of our mountains contend against one another in nightly concerts, amidst the flocks which tinkle their bells as they browse their pastures."

He describes another of these country houses so briefly and yet so completely that we extract the entire passage: it is in the south of Gaul (Narbonne), the property of Consentius.

"Situated in the neighbourhood of a city, a river, and the sea, it supplies food for your guests, and guests for yourself. Moreover, it offers by its situation an agreeable prospect. First, the house presents high walls disposed with art following all the rules of architectural symmetry; then, it is embellished with a chapel, majestic porticoes, and baths; lastly, fields, streams, vineyards, oliveyards, avenues, an esplanade, a mount, make it a delicious abode. To the richness and elegance and convenience of the furniture you have added the treasures of a large library, so that while you thus occupy yourself with

literature and with agriculture, one does not know which is best cultivated, your estate or your mind." *

Other letters † give a pleasant description of the mode of life which the cultured Gallo-Roman gentry led in their country residences.

Another letter gives a personal description of Theodoric II., King of the Visigoths, the predecessor of Euric, and a very interesting description of his daily life, which, long as it is, is worth quoting, since it helps us much to realize what manner of men these barbarian kings were. "Theodoric is a very noticeable man, one who would at once attract attention even from those who casually beheld him, so richly have the will of God and the plan of nature endowed his person with gifts corresponding with his fortunes. His character is such that not even the detraction which waits on kings can lessen the praises bestowed upon it. . . . Before dawn he attends with a small suite the office of Prime [*Antelucanos*] of his [Arian] priests, and worships with great diligence; but, to speak in confidence, one can see that he observes this reverence out of habit rather than out of devotion. The cares of administration occupy the rest of the morning. An armed attendant stands beside his chair; a crowd of skin-clad guards are so far admitted as to be at hand, and so far excluded as not to disturb by their noise, so that the murmur of their conversation may be just heard before the doors, without the curtains

* Lib. viii. Ep. 4.
† Lib. ii. Letter 9; Lib. viii. Ep. 13.

but within the barriers. Meanwhile audience is given to the ambassadors of the nations; he hears them at length, he answers briefly. If anything can be protracted he is slow, if anything to be done he is prompt.

"When the second hour is come, he rises from his seat, and finds time to inspect his treasury or his stable. If a hunt has been ordered, he considers it beneath the royal dignity to carry his bow by his side, but if you point out, or if chance presents, bird or beast, he puts his hand behind him; his attendant puts the unstrung bow into it, for he would think it childish to carry it in a case, and womanish to take it ready strung. Therefore, having taken it, he sometimes strings it by bringing the two heads together with his hands; sometimes, putting the knotted end to his heel, he slips the knot of the loose cord into its place with his finger; he takes the arrows, fixes, shoots them, first asking what you wish him to hit. You say what he should do, and he does it; if either makes a mistake, it is more rarely the aim of the archer than the sight of the chooser which is in fault.

"If you are asked to dinner, which on non-festal days is like that of a private person, no panting servant places on the table a tasteless heap of tarnished silver. It is the conversation which is weighty, for there people talk of serious things or not at all. The cushions of the couches and the tapestries of the room are sometimes of purple, sometimes of fine linen. The meals please by

skilful cookery, not by costliness; the dishes by their polish, not their massiveness. The cups and goblets are so seldom filled, that you are more likely to complain of thirst than to incur the complaint of intemperance. What shall I say more? You see there Greek elegance, Gallic abundance, Italian quickness, the stateliness of a public banquet, the courtesy of a private host, the etiquette of a royal household. The splendour of the Saturday festival* I need not describe, since no one is ignorant of it. Let me return to what I undertook.

"The midday sleep is never long, and is often omitted. At this hour he likes to play at tables.†

"You would think he was waging war even in playing his men; his sole care is to win. When playing he lays aside a little his royal gravity; he bids one play truly as between friends. To tell you what I think, he fears to be feared. Then he is amused by the vexation of the loser, and believes that he has not let him win out of courtesy when he sees him annoyed at his defeat. What will amuse you is that often his satisfaction arising from such insignificant causes furthers the success of serious affairs. Then petitions which have been refused before to influential solicitation, are granted at once. I myself have sometimes considered

* *De luxu Sabbatario.* The Goths, being Arians, kept Saturday as a feast, while the Catholics fasted.

† The game here mentioned was a very common one at this period, but what was the nature of it is uncertain; it was played with a board (*tabula*), dice (*tesseræ*), and men (*calculi*); it is difficult to determine how to translate some of the technical words used in the description of it.

myself fortunate in being vanquished, since my lost game has won me my cause.

"About nine o'clock the cares of government recommence. The door keepers return, the patrons return. The noise of litigation goes on into the evening, till the royal supper interrupts it, and then it spreads throughout the palace with the patrons, and keeps them awake till bedtime.

"During supper sometimes, though not often, mimic actors are introduced, but no guest is allowed to be wounded by their biting pleasantries. Here there are no hydraulic organs, no learned and tedious concerts, no lyrist or flutist, no female player on the tambourine or psaltery; the king is only pleased with those strains whose sense soothes the soul as much as their melody the ear. When he has risen from table the guards of the treasure begin their nightly watch; armed guards are placed at the doors of the palace, who keep watch during the hours of the first sleep." *

In Lib. iv. 20, he describes a youth of royal race —probably a Frank—who has married the daughter of some distinguished Gallo-Roman, paying a visit to the palace of his father-in-law. "You who are fond of seeing armour and armed men, what a pleasure it would have been to you could you have seen the royal youth Sigimer, decked out in the fashion and splendour of his race, like a bride-

* The reader may, if he pleases, compare with this the Imperial supper of Majorian, minutely and interestingly described in Lib. i. Ep. 11, and the Roman banquet in Lib. viii. 13.

groom or suitor, visiting the palace of his father-in-law! His own horse gorgeously caparisoned, other horses trapped with blazing gems going before or following him; but what most deserved attention was the young prince himself, on foot, in the midst of his outriders and rear-guard, clad in a combination of flaming crimson, shining gold, and milk-white silk, his ruddy cheeks, golden hair, and milk-white skin repeating these colours of his dress. The aspect of the petty kings and companions who accompanied him was terrible, even in their peaceful errand. They had the foot protected with leather, while the calf, knee, and thigh were uncovered. Their tunics, of various colours, coming high up in the neck, tight-girdled, scarcely reached their bare legs; the sleeves covered only the upper part of their arms; they had green cloaks adorned with purple fringes; their swords, depending from their shoulders by baldrics, were pressed close to their sides by the reindeer skins, which were fastened by a round clasp.* As for that part of their adornment which was also a defence, their right hand held hooked lances and battle-axes for throwing; their left sides were shadowed by round shields, whose silvery lustre, with a golden boss, proclaimed wealth as well as taste. All was so ordered that in this wedding

* Mr. Hodgkin ("Italy and her Invaders") says that the *Rheno* or reindeer skin seems to have answered the same purpose as the waterproof of modern civilization, and, like it, when not actually in use would be rolled up and slung over the shoulder.

procession the splendour of Mars was not less apparent than that of Venus."

Another letter, in a few jocose verses, gives a picture of the curious mixture of barbarous rudeness and Roman refinement which that mixed society presented, and makes no secret of the feelings with which the Gallo-Roman nobility endured the coarseness of their barbarian masters. We are indebted to Mr. Hodgkin's "Italy and her Invaders" for a poetical version in which he retains the metre of the original:—

"Ah me, my friend, why bid me, e'en if I had the power
To write the light Fescennine verse, fit for the nuptial bower?
Do you forget that I am placed among the long-haired hordes,
That daily I am bound to hear the stream of German words,
That I must hear, and then must praise, with sorrowful grimace
(Disgust and approbation both contending in my face),
Whate'er the gormandizing sons of Burgundy may sing,
While they upon their yellow hair the rancid butter fling?

"Now let me tell you what it is that makes my lyre be dumb:
It cannot sound when all around barbarian lyres do hum.
The sight of all these patrons tall (each one is seven feet high)
From my poor muse makes every thought of six-foot metres fly.
Oh! happy are thine eyes, my friend: thine ears, how happy those!
And oh! thrice happy I would call thy undisgusted nose.
'Tis not round thee that every morn ten talkative machines
Exhale the smell of onions, leeks, and all their vulgar greens;
They do not seek thy house, as mine, before the dawn of day,
So many giants and so tall, so fond of trencher play,
That scarce Alcinous himself, that hospitable king,
Would find his kitchen large enough for the appetites they bring.
They do not, these effusive souls, declare they look on thee
As father's friend or foster-sire—but alas! they do on me.

"But stop, my muse! pull up! be still! or else some fool will say, 'Sidonius writes lampoons again.' Don't you believe them, pray."

We will only, at present, allude to one more of these interesting letters,* which gives us a glimpse of a Roman military officer, causing his trumpets to sound the signal of departure on board the fleet, for, with the duties of a soldier and a sailor combined, he has orders to coast along the winding shores of the ocean, looking out for the curved barks of the Saxons—pirates every man of them. Prevented by the Franks, who intervened between them and the empire, from taking part in the adventures by which other tribes were carving out settlements on the continent, the Saxons took to their ships and crossed over to Britain, from which Honorius had withdrawn the legions, and there founded the kingdoms of the East, West, and South Saxons. Others of them, it seems, sailed further westward, making descents upon the coasts of Gaul, exercising great cruelties, and not only carrying off the property of the people, but carrying off the people themselves as slaves. He mentions in this letter that before embarking on their return home from one of these plundering expeditions, it was their custom to slay with tortures a tenth part of their captives, from a superstitious notion that they would thus ensure a safe return voyage.

* Lib. vii. Ep. 6.

CHAPTER IV.

THE CONQUESTS OF CLOVIS.

The battle of Soissons and conquest of the Roman province—The marriage of Clovis—War with the Alemanni—The battle of Tolbiac—The conversion of Clovis—The Franks embrace Christianity—Conquest of the Burgundians—Conquest of Aquitaine—Consolidation of the Frank kingdoms—The Franks and the Latins separate nations—Survey of the Frank Empire—The cities—Clovis nominated consul and patrician.

CLOVIS,* we have said, was only fourteen years of age when his father's death devolved upon him the

* It will be convenient to say, once for all, that these Frankish proper names have come down to us in the spelling by which the contemporary historians, writing in Latin, endeavoured to represent the Germanic sounds, with the addition of a Latin termination; as Chlovechus, or Clodovicus, Theodoricus, Chilpericus, Childebertus, Sigibertus, Guntchramnus, or Guntramnus, Theodebertus, Brunechildis, Fredegundis, Radegundis, Chrodieldis, etc. The original names were Hlodwig or Chlodwig, Theudorich, Hilprich, Childibert, Sigibert, Gundram, Theudobert, Brunihild, Fredegund, Radegund, Hruothilda, etc. Modern German most nearly retains the ancient names in its Ludwig, Dietrich, etc.; modern French has softened them into Louis, Thierry, etc. We have been content to adopt the forms of these proper names which are most familiar to English readers.

chieftainship of one of the small principalities into which the Franks were divided, which could furnish a band of about four thousand warriors. But the young king was of the daring, enterprising, unscrupulous, and able character of which, in troubled times, successful adventurers are made; and, with these small means, his audacity and favouring circumstances won for him within a few years the conquest of the whole of Gaul.

The Franks had long been the allies of the empire, and had formed a defence for it along the frontier of the Lower Rhine. But no doubt the example of other barbarian adventurers who were winning possessions in other parts of the empire fired the mind of the ambitious, enterprising young Frank; probably the barbarian races behind the Franks shared the general unquiet among the barbarians, and pushed them on towards the empire. Clovis took a great resolution, assembled his warriors, and marched them across the forests to Soissons, attacked the Prefect Syagrius, and inflicted upon him a total defeat. Syagrius fled for refuge to his ally, the Gothic king at Thoulouse; was given up by this ally on the demand of Clovis, and put to death. No one took upon himself to maintain the interests of the distant emperor; no one attempted to rally the forces of the province against the Frankish conqueror. Thus, at the cost of one battle, the young Frank adventurer, the chief of a few thousands of semi-barbarians, living the rude life of farmers and hunters in their scattered hamlets, found him-

self the successor of the Imperial authority over the populous and wealthy cities, the fertile lands studded with luxurious villas, the wealthy and civilized population of the whole of Northern Gaul.

He exercised his power with politic moderation: respected the municipal institutions of the cities, which made them almost self-governing, left unmolested the property and liberties of the people generally, and continued the administration of the Imperial law through the existing hierarchy of officials. The lands of the Imperial treasury and the unreclaimed lands afforded ample means of rewarding his warriors, who, grouped here and there on their new estates, formed a sufficient garrison where no one thought of resistance.

Of the Teutonic races who figure prominently in the overthrow of the Western Empire in the fifth century—Goth, Vandal, Burgundian, Sweve, Frank, Lombard, and Saxon—all had become Christians in the course of the previous century, with the exception of the Franks and Saxons. The Goths, we know, had been converted by the labours of Ulphilas. How the Gospel spread to the other races we do not know. No record whatever, not even a legend, remains on the subject, except in the case of the Burgundians. Socrates, the ecclesiastical historian, tells us that this race had already occupied the left bank of the Rhine, had acquired peaceful habits, and employed themselves in some kind of manufacture, when the terrible invasion of the Huns under Attila broke in upon their quiet

industry. Despairing of the aid of man, they looked round for some protecting deity. The God of the Romans appeared the mightiest, as worshipped by the most powerful people. They sought the aid of the bishop of some neighbouring city of Gaul, and, after some previous preparation, received the rite of baptism. A victory over their enemy confirmed them in their new faith. Subsequently, probably through the influence of their Teutonic kindred, they adopted the Arian creed.

At the period at which we have now arrived, Gondebaud, one of the Burgundian kings, had slain his brother Chilperic with his wife, and condemned their two daughters to exile. The envoys of Clovis had praised the beauty and good sense of Clotilda, the younger of the princesses. Clovis demanded her in marriage, and Gondebaud did nor care to risk his enmity by a refusal.* In some unexplained way Clotilda had been brought up in the orthodox creed, which Gondebaud and large numbers of the Burgundians a little later also embraced, under the influence of Avitus, the distinguished bishop of Vienne. The Christian wife naturally tried to convert her heathen husband, but without success. He gave every toleration to the religion of his newly conquered Gallo-Roman subjects; he paid every respect to the powerful bishops of the cities in his new dominions; in his own house he allowed his queen to follow her religion, and when a child was born to them he

* Gregory of Tours, Lib. ii. 28.

allowed its mother to have it baptized. The death of the child within a few days, while still, according to custom, wearing its white baptismal robes, was calculated to leave a sinister impression; but when a second child was born, he allowed this also to be baptized. This also began to sicken; but the pious Clotilda prayed earnestly that its life might be spared for the promotion of God's glory among the heathen. She naturally regarded its recovery, and represented it to her husband, as an answer to her prayers.

We may be sure that the relations of Clovis to his Christian conquests had its influence upon his religious views; Christianity was universally regarded as the religion of civilization, heathenism as the religion of barbarism. There is no reason to think that the Franks were more opposed to Christianity than the other barbarians who had already embraced Christianity, only the Christian teachers had not reached them and their Saxon neighbours. Once brought into these close relations with the Gallo-Romans the conversion of the Franks was sure, sooner or later, to follow. The influences of civilization and Christianity were already acting forcibly upon the able mind of the young Frank prince; and these influences, domestic and political, were gradually preparing the mind of Clovis for the conversion which a special crisis soon precipitated.

The barbarian tribes beyond the Rhine and Danube were still in motion, and those who had

already seized upon possessions in the empire had to defend them against all comers. It was probably some such movement which shortly brought the Franks into hostilities with the kindred Alemanni.

The hostile forces met in battle at Tolbiac (Zülpich, near Cologne). The small army of the Franks was hard pressed by the Alemanni. Clovis, like Constantine on the eve of his engagement with Maxentius, looked about him for some supernatural aid. He invoked the God of the Christians, and vowed that if He would give him the victory, he would believe in Him and be baptized. The tide of battle turned. The king of the Alemanni was slain; and the Alemanni, in danger of total destruction, hailed Clovis as their king (A.D. 496).

There is a remarkable difference between this second great Conversion of the Barbarians and the first great Conversion of the Empire. In the first conversion individual souls were gathered in one by one; the work began among the lower classes of the people, and gradually worked its way upwards through the higher classes, and the conversion of the emperor marks the triumph of Christianity over the cultured paganism of Greece and Rome. In the second conversion the work usually began with the kings; the question of the adoption of Christianity was considered as a political question which affected the national life. The king submitted the question first to his counsellors, then it was proposed to the tribesmen; and usually the baptism of the king was accompanied by that of a

large number of his people. These features of the barbarian conversion are illustrated in the case of the Franks.

Clotilda summoned Remigius, the saintly bishop of Rheims, to instruct the royal convert and prepare him for baptism. We are told that when the young hero heard from the bishop's lips the history of Christ's passion and death, he gave curious evidence of his sympathy with the Divine sufferer, and of his failure to understand the spiritual significance of the awful transaction, by exclaiming, "Had I been there with my Franks I would have taught those Jews a lesson!"

The king's baptism took place at the following Christmas.* It was performed with all the solemnity and pomp which the great and wealthy Church of Rheims could display on so important an occasion, and the ceremony is elaborately described in rhetorical language by Gregory of Tours and others. The church was hung with embroidered tapestry and white curtains; it blazed with countless lights; odours of incense, like airs of Paradise, were diffused around.† Remigius addressed his royal catechumen: "Gently bow thy head, Sicambrian; henceforth worship that which thou hast burnt, and burn that which thou hast worshipped." The king's example was followed by his people; five thousand of his warriors are said to have been

* The contemporary Avitus says Christmas. Fredegarius the chronicler, a century later, says Easter.

† Gregory of Tours, ii. 31.

baptized at one time; and Christianity was adopted as the national religion; though for a century after there are evidences that their old religion still lingered among the Franks.

The importance of the conversion of Clovis was increased by the fact that at that time he was the only orthodox sovereign in Christendom; the other barbarian kings were Arians, and Anastasius, the Eastern emperor, favoured the Monophysites. This fact had a great influence upon his political prospects. It did much to reconcile his Latin subjects to his sovereignty, and it attracted the sympathies of the Latin inhabitants of the other provinces of Gaul — Burgundy and Aquitaine.* Clovis was quite ambitious enough to desire to unite the whole of Gaul under his rule, and politic enough to take full advantage of this religious feeling in his favour.

He began hostilities against the Burgundians, and secured the secret good wishes of the cities and Latin population generally, by the profession of his religious sympathies. The Latin inhabitants of the Burgundian provinces, after in vain suggesting to their rulers that to adopt the orthodox creed would strengthen their position, hardly disguised their sympathies with the orthodox Franks; and several bishops and influential Gallo-Romans were exiled in consequence. The result of a series of engagements was that the Burgundians were compelled to acknowledge the Frank as their "suzerain,"

* Gregory of Tours, ii. 23, 36.

to pay him tribute in peace, and send their warriors to follow his banner in war.

The Visigoths gave him a pretext for undertaking a war to deliver the people of Aquitaine from a religious persecution. Euric, the Gothic king, was a zealous Arian, who harassed and persecuted the Latin population, exiled their bishops, imprisoned their priests, and blocked up the doors of their churches with thorns.* Clovis came in the character of the champion of the Catholic religion. A single battle at Poitiers, A.D. 508, broke the Visigothic power in Gaul, and the wealthy and refined Latin population of this flourishing province gladly exchanged the sovereignty of the Arian Euric for that of the orthodox Clovis, and the Gothic garrisons and "guests" † for those of a ruder race who at least were co-religionists.

The last great measure which consolidated the power of Clovis was the union of all the subdivisions of the Frank nation under his own kingship. The historians accuse him of not shrinking from crime in the pursuit of this object of his ambition. They say that he suggested to the son of Sigebert, king of the Ripuarian Franks, the assassination of his father, with the promise that he would favour his succession, then caused the parricide to be slain, and obtained his own election.

* Gregory of Tours, ii. 25. It was the usual way of forbidding access to the holy places. See "Etudes Historiques," by C. Barthélemy (Paris, 1847), p. 380.

† "Guests" were barbarians quartered upon the estates of the Latin landowners.

They accuse him also of getting rid of his near relations, the chiefs who ruled over the subdivisions of the Salian Franks at Therouanne and Cambrai, and thus removing the obstacles to the consolidation of the Frankish power.

Lastly, the Armoricans nominally recognized the sovereignty of Clovis; but, safe in the depths of their forests, they had little intercourse with the rest of the world, and were practically independent.

Let us briefly glance at the condition of the Frankish Empire at the end of the conquests of Clovis.

To begin with the original seats of the nation. All the right bank of the Rhine, from the mountains of Switzerland to the shores of the German Ocean, in a belt of variable breadth, bounded on the east by the Saxons and Frisians, was inhabited entirely by Franks. On the left bank of the Rhine also, from the Moselle down to the ocean, the Franks inhabited the country which their fathers had won a century before. Passing from the Rhine to the Somme, a mixture of population begins to appear, and the further westward the greater the intermixture of Latins among the Franks; but still the Franks are the proprietors of the country, and are settled on the land in entire tribes and agricultural communities, and the Gallo-Roman population is chiefly in the condition of labourers and artizans among the Frankish conquerors. The Somme is the boundary line between the country in which the

Franks dwell, and that of which they are only masters. Beyond the Somme, and passing westward towards the Seine, the Latin population predominates. The cities are entirely Roman. The Franks are settled only here and there in military colonies, safe-guarding the sovereignty of King Clovis. As we pass on into Aquitaine the population is still more entirely Roman in character. The general prosperity of this beautiful country was little interrupted either by Goth or Frank; and it retained its ancient Roman civilization, altered only by the progress of a gradual decadence.

We shall find in the sequel that these natural differences in the character of the populations make themselves felt in their political history. The civilization of the Romano-Gallic land effected a moral conquest over the Franks who garrisoned and governed it, and they ended by adopting its interests. The feeling of antagonism between the Romano-Gallic people and the Frank people continued for ages after their union; and the Somme was in fact the boundary between two nations, Austrasia and Neustria.

One important feature of the political condition of the mixed populations of all those districts in which the Franks were only military settlers, is that the original Latin inhabitants and the barbarians settled among them continued to be two distinct peoples, each governed by its own laws. The Franks were ruled by the king of their own election, according to their national laws and customs;

the Latins were ruled by the old Imperial law, administered by magistrates, probably in most cases of their own race, appointed by the king. The relations of the Latin race with their barbarian masters were fairly equitable, and not unkindly.* What oppression there was, was chiefly due to the wickedness of Gallo-Romans, who used their office under the Franks in tyrannizing over their own countrymen;† and in not a few cases the smaller landed proprietors voluntarily abandoned their condition as Romans, and placed themselves under the protection of a powerful Frank neighbour, and became his "men," and thereby escaped the tyranny of their own magistrates, and the exactions of the old Roman fiscal system.

The barbarian kings, indeed, soon saw the wisdom of embodying their national customs in written codes; and in drawing up these codes, probably with the assistance of their Roman advisers as well as of their chiefs and elders, they introduced more or less of modification and improvement called for by their new condition and their growing civilization. The Salic law, the code of the Franks, opens with a stately preface, in which they speak of themselves as "the nation of the Franks, illustrious, having God for its founder, brave in arms, constant in the works of peace, profound in counsel, faithful to

* Gregory of Tours gives no hint that the natives were oppressed by the Franks.

† Sidonius (Lib. v. Ep. 7) pours out his detestation of these men in pages of energetic rhetoric.

treaties, noble and healthy in body, of a singular fairness and beauty, hardy, active, bold in combat, lately converted to the Catholic faith, free from heresy; while yet in a barbarous belief seeking, by the inspiration of God, the key of knowledge; loving justice, mindful of pity. The Salic law was dictated by the chiefs of the nation, who at that time held command among them. . . . Glory to Christ, who loves the Franks! May He have regard to their kingdom! . . . This is the nation which, small in numbers, but brave and strong, broke off from its neck the hard yoke of the Romans."

The condition of the cities forms another very important feature in the political and social condition of the country. Each great fortified city, with a tract of country around it and dependent upon it, had a municipal constitution modelled on the republican constitution of ancient Rome. It governed itself in all internal affairs. It paid a tribute to the Imperial or royal treasury in one fixed sum, raising the sum among the citizens at the discretion of its own officers. Its walls and towers * were manned by its own militia, not by the Imperial or royal troops; and, on the other hand, its citizens were not liable to serve in the royal armies. The great landowners of the neighbourhood usually had

* Gregory of Tours describes Dijon in his time, situated in the midst of a fertile plain, with walls thirty feet high and five thick, studded with thirty-three towers; a small stream ran through the town, and was used to fill a moat round the ramparts, and to turn many mills in front of the gates (Lib. iii. 19).

town houses, which were their chief mansions;* they were citizens, and often held municipal offices. Each city then was a little republic. There was little feeling of community of interest among them; on the contrary, there were frequent jealousies between one city and another, which provoked quarrels, and sometimes broke out into actual hostilities.

This condition of the cities will help to explain the weakness of the empire against the barbarians; each of these little republics stood on its own defence, and contributed nothing to the general security. It will account for the readiness with which the province of Syagrius submitted to Clovis when the Prefect had been defeated at Soissons. And we must bear in mind that these cities retained their constitution under the Franks, and continued to be to a great extent Latin republics in the midst of a Frankish empire.

The last incident which we have to mention in the history of Clovis is the legalization of his position in Gaul by the Imperial recognition. When Odoacer made Augustulus resign the purple, he also made the senate report to the court of Constantinople that it was unnecessary to maintain an emperor of the West; that they placed themselves under the authority of the emperor of the East, and requested him to nominate Odoacer as his

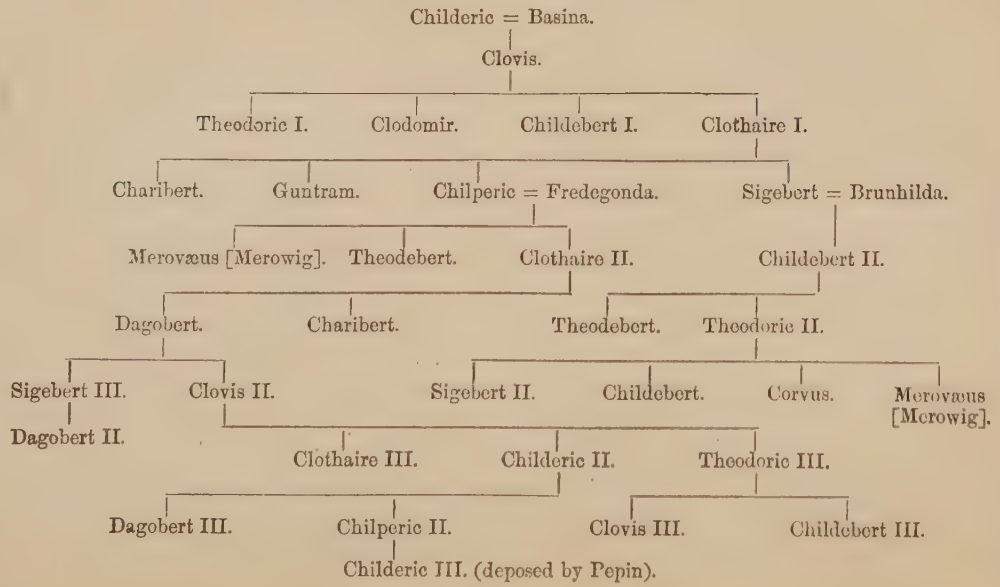
* An enactment of the council which Clovis summoned at Orleans in the last year of his reign required that the inhabitants of towns should not pass the great festivals of the Church—Christmas, Easter, and Pentecost—in their country houses.

representative in Italy. The Byzantine court, with a refined and far-seeing policy, thereupon assumed the nominal sovereignty over the whole empire; and proceeded to legalize the position of the barbarian kings who had gained settlements within it, and to harmonize their actual power with the Imperial theory, by conferring upon them titles which made them nominally the representatives of the Imperial authority. The kings, profoundly awed by the idea of the Imperial authority, which in fact they so rudely violated, were glad to bear the titles of Consul and Patrician which centuries had made illustrious; they probably found, also, that it conciliated their subjects to be able to regard themselves as once more citizens of the empire ruled by legitimate authority, rather than as subjects, by right of conquest, of the barbarian.

Thus, in the last year of the reign of Clovis, A.D. 510, he accepted from the Emperor Anastasius the title of Consul and Patrician, and rode to the cathedral of Tours, clad in the Roman tunic and purple mantle, scattering a royal donative among the people, who, in their adulations, hailed him with the titles of Consul and Augustus.

He died in the course of the year which witnessed this climax of his dignity, and was buried at Paris in the Church of the Apostles (afterwards of St. Geneviève) which he and Clotilda had built.

THE MEROVINGIAN LINE.



CHAPTER V.

THE MEROVINGIAN KINGS.

Division of the dominions of Clovis among his four sons—Reconquest of Burgundy—Death of Clodomir and murder of his sons—Conquest of Thuringia—Ostrogothic possessions in Gaul relinquished to the Franks—Bavaria and Swabia recognize the Frankish sovereignty—Death of Theodoric and of his son—Death of Childebert—Clothaire sole king—Private life of the Frank kings—Death of Clothaire, and division of the kingdom again among his four sons—Their characters—Charibert—Guntram—Anecdote of trial by combat—Chilperic—Sigebert—Marriage of Sigebert and Brunhilda—Of Chilperic and Galeswintha—Fredegonda—War between Sigebert and Chilperic—Assassination of Sigebert—Succeeded by Childebert II.—The remarriage of Brunhilda—Fate of Merowig—The pretender Gundovald.

THE details of the history of the Merovingian period of Frankish history are extraordinarily complicated; happily, it is not at all necessary for our purpose to follow them. We shall hope to be able to give a clear and intelligible conception of the general features of the history, which is enough for our purpose; and there is a superabundance of interesting episode to enliven the narrative, and to help to

fix the character of the times and the people in the reader's memory.

On the death of Clovis, his dominions were, after the German custom, dealt with as if they had been his private possessions, and divided among his sons—Theodoric, Clodomir, Childebert, and Clothaire. The kingdoms, however, were federative under one political law, and had a common assembly which deliberated on the common affairs of the four states.*

It is worth while to consult the map, and to take a little pains to obtain a clear idea of these divisions, for they recur again and again, with minor variations, during the whole of the subsequent history.

Theodoric, the eldest, had the lion's share, viz. Austrasia—the Eastern kingdom—the home of the Frankish nation, with some isolated territories in the south of Gaul. His capitals were Metz and Rheims. The more recent conquests of Clovis, Neustria—the Western kingdom—and Burgundy, were divided among the three other brothers. The boundaries of their territories are not clearly made out. Clodomir's capital was at Orleans, and his territory comprised the southern part of Neustria. Childebert's capital was Paris, and his kingdom was the middle part of Neustria. To Clothaire fell the eastern part of Neustria, with Soissons for his capital city.

When we note that Theodoric was the son of

* Chateaubriand, "L'Histoire de France."

an unknown, but doubtless heathen mother, and that he ruled over the German portion of the Frankish dominions, while the three sons of Clotilda ruled over the Gallo-Roman provinces; and when we find that the three younger brothers were usually associated in their great military undertakings, while their half-brother held aloof from them, and carried on independent warlike expeditions, we shall recognize at once the early existence of that political distinction between the Teutonic and the Gallican portions of the Frankish Empire, which had an important influence upon the whole of the subsequent history.

The career of Frankish conquest did not come to an end with the death of Clovis; his sons continued to extend the boundaries of the wide dominions he had left them.

At the outset, indeed, they had to make good that which Clovis had won. Burgundy had reasserted its independence at, if not a little before, the death of its conqueror. The three kings of Neustria combined against it. Clodomir died in the first campaign, and his brothers at once divided his dominions among themselves, regardless of the rights of his sons. Two of these sought an asylum with their grandmother Clotilda, who was living a life of devotional retirement at Tours. The two uncles shortly obtained possession of them, under pretence of restoring to them their father's kingdom, and then gave Clotilda the choice whether

she would have her grandchildren dealt with "by the scissors* or the sword." It illustrates the fierce temper of even the women of these Teutonic royalties, that the queen-mother, the religious widow, chose for her grandchildren death rather than degradation. Clothaire took her at her word, and in spite of some feeble remonstrance from Childebert, stabbed them both with his own hand. A third son of Clodomir escaped the fate of his brothers, entered into "religion," and is the reputed founder of St. Cloud.

It required several further campaigns to conquer the Burgundians; Gondemar, their king, was deposed (A.D. 532), and the splendid country east of the Rhone, with its mixed population of Latins and Burgundians, was incorporated into the Frank empire.

Childebert made war on the Visigoths, ostensibly to avenge the insults offered to his sister Clotilda, who was married to Amalaric, king of the Visigoths, and whose orthodoxy exposed her to persecution. Amalaric was defeated and slain in the first battle, and the whole of his Gallic possessions, except the narrow slip of Septimania, were incorporated into the Frankish Empire.

Meantime Theodoric, with his Austrasians, had been carrying on war and effecting conquests in another direction. The origin of his conquest of

* To cut the hair of a Merovingian prince was to degrade him from his rank and make him incapable of reigning—at least, until his hair had grown again.

Thuringia affords one of those anecdotes which lighten the dry details of the narrative.

The Thuringians now occupied the territory which the Franks had vacated a century earlier, when they went forth to the conquest of new seats in Gaul. Thuringia, by the German custom of inheritance, was at this time divided between two brothers, Baderic and Hermanfried. A third brother, Berthaire, had been already slain by Hermanfried, and left a daughter, Radegunda, of whom we shall hear again. The wife of Hermanfried was Amalaberg, a niece of Theodoric the Great, the king of the Ostrogoths. Tacitus has told us how the German races respected their women, and took their advice in the transaction of the business of life. We find many illustrations of it in this Merovingian age, in which women took part in affairs, and exhibited all the ambition, political ability, unscrupulousness, and cruelty of men. The niece of the great Gothic king was dissatisfied with being the queen of half a petty kingdom. She had often, like another Lady Macbeth, tried to rouse her husband's ambition against his brother. One day, when the king and his companions returned from the hunt to supper, they found only half the table covered with its cloth and laid with its platters and cups, while the other half was bare.*

* We are reminded of the border chieftain's wife, who served up a pair of spurs for her husband's supper, as a hint that the larder was empty, and that he must ride on a foray if he would have meat to eat.

The queen replied to his angry questions that the king who was content with half a kingdom must be content to have half his royal board furnished. The scoff had its desired effect. The king prepared for war against his brother, and sought the powerful aid of the Austrasian king. Theodoric took advantage of their civil war; helped Hermanfried to conquer his brother, and then fell upon the conqueror and seized the whole country for himself. He planted strong colonies of Franks in their ancient seats, and thus gained a great accession of strength, and obtained a footing in the heart of Germany which had subsequent important results.

A little later, when the Emperor Justinian was engaged in hostilities against Theodates, the king of the Ostrogoths, both sought the alliance and aid of Theodoric. The Frank took the pay of both parties. He took the money which the emperor offered; and at the same time he accepted from Theodates the Ostrogothic possessions in Gaul, viz. the country between the Rhine, the Alps, and the sea, with part of Rhetium. Shortly after we find that the Bavarians and the Swabians, who lay between these Thuringian and Rhetian acquisitions, recognized the Frankish sovereignty.

The powerful king of Austrasia died in A.D. 547, leaving a sickly boy as his heir, who also died in six years, childless. Childebert was now a feeble and childless old man, so Clothaire seized, without opposition, upon the whole of the Austrasian kingdom; and when Childebert died, five years afterwards

(in A.D. 558), the whole of the dominions of Clovis, together with the great additions made to them by his sons, were reunited in the hands of Clothaire.

We get a sufficiently distinct idea of the private life of these sons of Clovis. They retained their Teutonic preference for a country life, and their ancestral manners. Instead of taking up their residence in their capital cities, they lived upon their farms, where extensive but rude buildings, arranged without any rule but that of convenience, afforded accommodation for the family and followers of a great Frank chief. Clothaire, for instance, usually lived at Braine, on the banks of a little river a few leagues from Soissons. They migrated, with their families and household, conveyed in great waggons drawn by oxen, from one royal farm to another. In short, they continued to live the rude ancestral life of the field and forest; they administered the affairs of their kingdoms with no lack of sagacity and vigour; they were often absent on warlike expeditions; in the intervals of business they hunted the great game which abounded in the extensive forests, bear and wolf, the now extinct aurochs, the wild cattle and stag, and they banqueted and caroused with their companions.

One especial feature of their private life must not be omitted. Tacitus praises the purity of the domestic life of the Germans; but the Frankish kings of history assumed to themselves a license as unbounded as that of Eastern sovereigns in the

multiplication of openly acknowledged wives and concubines; and the children of these alliances were regarded as all equally legitimate, and the sons as entitled to an equal inheritance in their fathers' possessions, while all the daughters were by the Salic law equally excluded from a right of inheritance.

After three years of sole reign, Clothaire, the last of the four brothers, died, and, as at the death of Clovis, the Frankish dominions were again divided by lot among his four sons—Charibert, Guntram, Chilperic, Sigebert. Charibert took the kingdom of Paris, which, extending lengthways from north to south, included the towns of Senlis, Mélun, Chartres, Tours, Poitiers, Saintes, Bordeaux, and the towns near the Pyrenees. Guntram took the kingdom of Orleans, together with the Burgundian territory; Chilperic the kingdom of Soissons; and Sigebert received the Austrasian kingdom, with the addition of some possessions in Auvergne, and the south-eastern province ceded to Austrasia by the Ostrogoths. What is remarkable in this division is that we find towns belonging to one king included within the territory of another, and some of the more important towns divided. Thus, Paris was divided between the three Neustrian kings, but all three were bound by oath not to enter it without permission of the others. Marseilles was divided into two between Sigebert and Guntram, and Senlis also between Sigebert and Chilperic. There is reason to believe that the land and the towns of

the conquered provinces were treated as two distinct subjects of division; that the lands were first divided into three parcels, and then the towns were divided into three lots according to the value of their tribute; so that Paris was not really divided into three quarters, only the tribute it produced was divided among the kings.

In the portion of the history upon which we now enter, we are so fortunate as to have in the contemporary historian, Gregory of Tours, one whose pages are unequalled for vivid incident and picturesque detail, until we come down to the fourteenth-century chronicler, Froissart.

The different characters of the four kings stand out well defined in his narrative. Charibert, the King of Paris, appreciated the value of the Roman civilization, prided himself on his knowledge of Latin, and of Roman law, and on his skill as a judge. He was not remarkable for much, except perhaps for the number of his wives. But he has an adventitious interest for us Englishmen, as the father of the Bertha who was married to King Ethelbert of Kent and was instrumental in the conversion of her husband to Christianity, as her great-grandmother Clotilda had been in the conversion of Clovis. Charibert died after a six years' reign, and his brothers divided his dominions among them.

The character of King Guntram was a strange mixture of qualities; ordinarily gentle in manner, timid, pious, almost saintly, he was subject to sudden outbursts of the fierce old Frankish nature

in him in fits of fury and deeds of violence; and he indulged in the unbounded incontinence which was characteristic of his family. Still, he was a man of strong religious leanings. He was a warm friend to the Church, exercised his power wisely in episcopal appointments, took bishops for his constant advisers in affairs, and conversed and ate with them with unusual familiarity, was regular in his attendance at divine service and at sermons. Gregory says, "You would have thought him a priest as well as a king." "With priests he was like a priest," says Fredegarius. He founded a monastery at Châlons, on the Marne, in which, in imitation of the Burgundian king Sigismund's foundation at St. Maurice, he instituted the *Laus Perennis*, the service of perpetual praise. There is a characteristic law of his commanding the observance of Sundays and holy days. The Frankish Church, in spite of the flaws in his character, enrolled his name among her saints. One anecdote of his life * contains in such brief space so many curious traits of the manners of the times, that we give it entire.

"The first year of King Childebert, which was the twenty-ninth of King Guntram, the latter, hunting in the forest of the Vosges, found there the remains of an aurochs, which had been killed." For the urus,† together with the bear and wolf, existed then

* Gregory of Tours, x. 10.

† The European bison, or aurochs, still survives in the forests of Lithuania, Moldavia, Wallachia, and the Caucasus, thanks to severe laws for its preservation. In his account of the Black Forest, Cæsar describes the species (the urus) thus: "They are

in the wild wooded mountains of the country of the Franks. "The keeper of the forest, being severely examined as to who had dared to kill this aurochs in the royal forest, named Chundon, the king's chamberlain." It would seem that the Merovingian kings had the same jealous regard for their wild bisons as William the Norman had for the deer, whom the Saxon historian says he loved as if he had been their father. For "Guntram gave orders to seize" this high and trusty officer of his court "and bring him to Châlons loaded with bonds."

The accuser and the accused were confronted in the presence of the king, and as Chundon maintained his innocence of the deed of which he was accused, the king ordered the combat. The trial by combat seems to be already fully established, with all its usages. "The chamberlain," being, we suppose, an aged man, "took the privilege of combating by champion, and presented his nephew to

but little less than elephants in size, and of the appearance, colour, and form of a bull. Their strength, as well as their speed, is very great. They spare neither man nor beast that they see. They cannot endure the sight of men, nor can they be tamed even when taken young. The people, who take them in pitfalls, assiduously destroy them; and young men harden themselves in this labour and exercise themselves in this kind of chase, and those who have killed a great number, the horns being publicly exhibited in evidence of the fact, obtain great honour. The horns in magnitude, shape, and quality differ much from the horns of our oxen. They are much sought for, and, after having been edged with silver at their open end, are used for drinking vessels at great feasts."—Cassell's "Natural History," ed. Prof. M. Duncan, vol. iii. p. 35.

fight in his place. The champions presented themselves in the lists; and the young man, having thrust his lance at the keeper of the forest, wounded him in the foot. He fell. But as the young man drew the knife which hung at his belt to cut his throat, the other pierced him in the belly. Both fell dead. At this sight Chundon took flight, in order to seek sanctuary at the basilica of St. Marcel; but the king cried out to take him before he could reach the sacred edifice. He was seized, fastened to a post, and stoned to death. Then Guntram," who was a strange compound of Christian mildness and Frank ferocity, "repented greatly that he had yielded so readily to anger, and had put to death with so much precipitation, for a single fault, a man who was useful and faithful to him."

Chilperic was, perhaps, the most able of the brothers. He had strong literary tastes, though Gregory of Tours sneers at his attempts at Latin poetry for being full of false quantities, and tells us that an exposition of the doctrine of the Trinity which he wished Gregory to adopt was heretical. He invented two new letters to express two sounds in the Frankish speech not represented in the Latin alphabet; and we learn, in the course of the story, that he took an active interest in the public schools which were maintained in the towns of his dominions. One prominent feature of his character was that he did not share the common reverence for the Church and the clergy. He did not hesitate to say that one bishop was foolish and another proud,

this verbose and that luxurious, this vain and that arrogant. He was accustomed to complain of the wealth of the Churches. "Our fisc is impoverished, while our wealth goes to the Churches! Truly, no one reigns but these bishops; our dignity is carried off by these city bishops." Few clerks in his time were made bishops; he gave the sees to his own creatures. The imagination, says Gregory, can suggest no sort of debauchery or luxury which he did not practise. Unjust and cruel, he killed men in order to obtain their wealth; he had the eyes of criminals torn out. In short, Gregory (who clearly has a special personal dislike of him) calls him "the Nero and Herod of our time."

Sigebert, of Austrasia, a Frank among his Franks, was perhaps of a more solid and respectable character than his brothers.

The chief interest of the period gathers about Chilperic and Sigebert; the other two brothers played minor parts in the story; or, rather, the interest groups itself about their queens, Fredegonda and Brunhilda, with all the dramatic interest of a wild, grand tragedy of days when human passions were more vehement and more unrestrained than in these later ages of civilization. Our next sentence will introduce the heroines of the strange drama.

The King of Austrasia did not indulge in the low amours which were a feature of the domestic life of the royal family, but sought a reputable wife and an equal alliance in the family of Athanagild,

King of the Goths of Spain. Brunhilda, the younger daughter of the Gothic king, had beauty, intellect, and accomplishments, and was worthy to be the bride of a great king.

The mayor of the palace (it is the first time we read of such an official) was sent on an embassy into Spain to demand her in marriage, and brought the young lady safely to her bridegroom at Metz. The Roman man of letters and poet, Venantius Fortunatus—whom we shall have to say more about hereafter—was present at the Austrasian court at the time of the marriage, and composed an *Epithalamium* in honour of the occasion.

His brother's example fired Chilperic with the resolve to put away his low loves and contract a royal marriage. Brunhilda had an elder sister, Galeswintha; Chilperic in turn sent an embassy to Spain, and demanded her hand in marriage, promising to break off all other connections, and to give her the sole rule of his heart and house. The historian draws a touching picture of the grief of Galeswintha and the sympathy of her mother; of the delays they begged for; how the mother started to accompany her daughter a little way on her journey, but could not bear to part with her, and so travelled with her all day; and again next morning would go a little way, and again could not part with her, and so travelled with her across Spain; and then the weeping women were only parted by the chief of the Gothic escort, who would not suffer the queen to encounter the dangers

which would have attended her return through the passes of the Pyrenees.*

The fears of the women were not groundless. In a short time Chilperic grew tired of his royal bride, and of a respectable domestic life. Fredegonda, a girl of Frank race, one of his former mistresses, regained her influence over him. Galeswintha, neglected by her husband, and insulted by her rival, demanded to be allowed to return to her father. A short time afterwards she was found strangled in bed; and rumour said that Fredegonda had ordered, and Chilperic had connived at, her murder.

Brunhilda demanded justice on her sister's murderers. King Guntram, as head of the Merovingian family, summoned a meeting of the Mâl, the assembly of elders. Before this popular court of justice of the nation of the Franks, King Sigebert accused his brother, King Chilperic, of the murder of his wife's sister, the hapless Galeswintha; and both agreed to abide by the decision of the court. Under the Teutonic laws the principle of compounding for a homicide by a fine to the relations of the dead

* Our sympathy with the queen-mother is somewhat moderated by the knowledge of her subsequent history. After the death of King Athanagild, she married his brother and successor, Leugevild, and raised a persecution against the orthodox in Spain. It was she who cruelly ill-treated her orthodox granddaughter Fredegonda (daughter of Sigebert and Brunhilda), married to the young Gothic prince Ermengild who had embraced the orthodox faith. Ermengild rebelled, and was put to death. On the death of Leugevild, his son Reccared succeeded him, avowed himself a Catholic, and at the Synod of Toledo, A.D. 589, attended by seventy bishops, established the orthodox faith in Spain.

held a prominent place. The elders of the Franks settled the controversy between the kings on this principle, by giving sentence that Chilperic should forfeit Galeswintha's dowry to her sister Brunhilda.

This was the beginning of the long hatred between the two queens, which forms the clue to the politics of the subsequent period. Happily, it is not necessary for us to enter into a history of the complicated civil contentions which followed. We can give the general character of them in a sentence: "Nothing in the joint reigns of Sigebert, Chilperic, and Guntram is more astonishing and perplexing to the reader than the suddenness with which they form and dissolve alliances with one another—the fickleness of their mutual friendships and the placability of their enmities. Within the space of ten years we find Guntram and Childebert allied against Chilperic, Chilperic and Childebert against Guntram, and Guntram and Chilperic against Childebert, and the parts were changed more than once during this period." *

Still, the general character of the civil war is that it was a contest between the powerful Austrasian king, stimulated to action by Brunhilda seeking vengeance for her murdered sister's wrongs, and the talented, versatile Chilperic, influenced by the beautiful demon Fredegonda.

The war between the brothers reached its climax when Sigebert invaded Neustria, for the second time, with an irresistible army composed not only

* Perry's "Franks," p. 142.

of Franks, but also of the kindred nations, still barbarian and heathen, who acknowledged his sovereignty. It was like a second barbarian invasion of the Gallic province. The Neustrians were unable to resist it; and, to arrest the ruin which threatened them, agreed to abandon Chilperic and choose Sigebert for their king.

The ceremony was arranged to take place at Vitry, near Tournai, on the border-line between the country which was settled by Franks, and the country of which the Franks held military occupation. Brunhilda had accompanied her lord, with her children and her treasures, to share his triumph. Chilperic was blockaded in the neighbouring city of Tournai with Fredegonda, deserted by his subjects, and with no hope of escaping capture and death.

Germanus, Bishop of Paris, in vain interposed in the interests of peace. Prevented by sickness from joining the municipal and ecclesiastical magnates in their reception of Brunhilda into their city, he addressed a letter to her, which still remains, in which he endeavours to enlist her interest on the side of peace; and prays her, like another Esther, to use her wifely influence with the king. He points out how the kings, in fighting against each other, were injuring themselves. He concludes, "Against the man who could lay aside all fraternal affection, who could despise the counsels of a wife, and refuse to acknowledge the truth, all the prophets raise their voices, all the apostles curse him,

and God Himself, the All-powerful, will judge him." As Sigebert passed out of Paris on his way to Vitry, to be elected King of the Neustrian Franks, Germanus appeared before him in the midst of the warriors, and made a last attempt to divert him from his intention, threatening in prophetic strain that if he persisted in going to seek his brother's death, he himself should die.

While Chilperic sullenly awaited the apparently inevitable end, the wicked genius of Fredegonda in a moment reversed the situation; Sigebert was assassinated in the midst of his victorious army by two men sent by Fredegonda. The Austrasians at once dispersed and returned home, each to look after his own interests. The subjects of Chilperic, relieved from their fears, returned to their allegiance, and some principal nobles of the Austrasians came over to his side. Brunhilda was seized in Paris, with her daughters and her treasures. Her son Childebert had been carried out of the city in a basket, and arrived safely at Metz, where he was at once elected as his father's successor in the kingdom of Austrasia. Chilperic seized the treasure of Brunhilda, but treated her with consideration, and assigned Rouen as her residence.

Here occurs another of the romantic episodes in which the history abounds. Merowig, the son of Chilperic, had seen Brunhilda in Paris and fallen in love with her. Sent by his father on a military expedition into Aquitaine, he had instead ridden off to Rouen; and the Bishop Pretextatus, who

was his godfather, and had the affection of a father for him, was induced to marry him to the widowed queen, notwithstanding they were in the forbidden relation of aunt and nephew. Chilperic came to Rouen. The couple took sanctuary in the precincts of the little wooden church of St. Martin, built on the ramparts of the town. Chilperic gave them an assurance of safety, and kept his promise. But shortly afterwards, the Austrasians sent to demand the widow and daughters of their late—and mother and sisters of their present—king, and Chilperic gladly allowed them to depart. But fearing a conspiracy to replace himself by Merowig, he condemned Merowig to have his hair cut and to be ordained a priest, and exiled him to a monastery near Le Mans. We shall have occasion, in another chapter, to relate how the young man refused to submit to this sentence of civil death, and fled to Tours, where he took sanctuary in the precincts of the church of St. Martin, and what kind of life he led there.

The end of the story of the misguided young man is that, escaping from his sanctuary, he sought refuge with his wife Brunhilda in Austrasia, but the nobles would not allow him to remain. After some adventures, he was induced at last to enter into plots against his father; was led by Fredegonda's intrigues to enter his dominions, in the belief that a party would take up arms in his behalf, but was entrapped; and rather than surrender and risk the indignities and cruelties which

might await him, like another Saul, bade his faithful brother-in-arms to kill him, and so perished.

The latter part of the reign of Guntram was disturbed by the pretensions of Gundovald, an illegitimate and unacknowledged son of Clothaire. Duke Guntram Bose, the high-born, reckless, desperate adventurer who had tempted Merowig to resist his father's sentence, and who so often appears in the stormy history of the time—Guntram Bose, on a visit to Constantinople, found the young man there, and put ambitious designs into his head. It would seem as if the court of Constantinople encouraged him, and assisted him with some treasure;* and the young Frank was accused of having agreed to hold the territory he might acquire in dependence on the empire.

Duke Mummolus, the patrician of Auvergne, the most famous general of the time, embraced his cause, with Duke Waddo, Bishops Sagittarius and Theodosius, and others of the great nobles of the south; the great towns of the south also opened their gates to him, for the whole of Southern Gaul would gladly have escaped from the sovereignty of the barbarians of the north and west, and have placed themselves under the empire. At first Childebert of Austrasia favoured the invaders' pretensions. But in the end, Gundovald, deserted by all his allies, was taken in the town of Comminges and put to death.

* His coinage differs from the contemporary Frankish coinage, and lends countenance to the belief that his adventure was undertaken under the patronage of the Byzantine court. See C. F. Keary on "The Coinage of Western Europe," *Numismatic Chronicle*, New Series, vol. xviii., p. 228.

CHAPTER VI.

THE MEROVINGIAN KINGS—*continued.*

Struggle between the royal power and the nobles—Death of Chilperic—Succeeded by Clothaire II.—Death of Pretextatus—Death of Guntram—Succeeded by Childebert of Austrasia—Death of Childebert—Succeeded by Theodebert in Austrasia, and Theodoric in Burgundy—Death of Fredegonda—Her character—Brunhilda driven to Burgundy—The two brothers unite against Clothaire—They go to war with each other—Theodebert slain—Theodoric dies—The Austrasian nobles invite Clothaire—Brunhilda and the Austrasian princes slain, and the whole of the Frank dominions united in Clothaire II.—Character of Brunhilda—Death of Clothaire II.—Succeeded by Dagobert, who gives Aquitaine to Charibert—Character of Dagobert—He gives up Austrasia to his son Sigebert.

THE royal power of the descendants of Clovis had gradually grown from the electoral chiefship of a German tribe to a high pitch of royal prerogative. It culminated in the joint reigns of Chilperic, Guntram, and Sigebert. The kings were strong not only in the number of warriors personally devoted to them, whom their large estates and great wealth enabled them to maintain, and in the obedience of their Gallo-Roman subjects, but their power was

also deeply rooted in the superstitious veneration of the common class of Franks for the sacred blood of the long-haired Merovings. The kings repaid the loyalty of their Franks by protection from the tyranny of the privileged and powerful class of nobles which had gradually grown up together with the royal power; nobles who possessed none of the high culture and refined manners of the Romano-Gallic Patricians whom they gradually superseded, and in whom the chivalry of the mediæval noble as yet lay dormant; men of strong, unrestrained passions and turbulent habits, who encroached upon the ancient freedom and equal rights of their countrymen, and resisted the royal authority.

Now, a popular king is the natural defender of the commons against the nobles, and the commons are the king's natural allies against the class which oppresses the one and defies the other.

The royal power culminated in the reigns of Chilperic, Guntram, and Sigebert; but by the close of their reigns the power of the nobles had become strong enough, and the natural growth of political ideas had advanced far enough, to lead them to the policy of an organized opposition to the royal power. The question really at issue was whether the royal power should continue to grow, on the Gallo-Roman model, into an absolute *Imperium* over a nation of subjects, or whether it should be restrained and restored to the Teutonic idea of an elective chieftainship over a nation of freemen.

The death of the powerful Sigebert and the election of his infant son to the throne seemed to offer a great opportunity to the Austrasian nobles. The leaders of the party of the nobles were Ægidius, Bishop of Rheims, one of the most powerful, ambitious, intriguing prelates of his time; and next to him Duke Rauchling the Cruel—the names suggest an alliance of the Gallo-Roman with the Frank aristocracy; they sought to retain the infant king in their hands and to rule in his name.

The political ability of the queen-mother, Brunhilda, now first begins to be conspicuously manifested. With great courage, ability, and constancy, she maintained the rights of the crown. And the political history of the Austrasian kingdom for the next thirty-eight years is chiefly a history of the struggle maintained between the queen-mother and the nobles. The rights of Childebert were sustained by his uncle, Guntram of Burgundy, who, being childless, agreed with his nephew that whichever died first the other should be his heir; while the party of the nobles were in friendly communication with Chilperic and Fredegonda.

Chilperic died in A.D. 584. Public opinion attributed his death to Fredegonda, while she accused Eberulf, the king's chamberlain. The queen took sanctuary. A sort of revolution ensued, of people who had been wronged in the last reign resuming their rights. For Fredegonda was driven by the nobles into retirement and disgrace. The elder

sons of Chilperic were all dead; Chramnus he had burnt; Clovis Fredegonda had assassinated; Meroves had committed suicide for fear of worse. Only the infant son of Fredegonda, Clothaire II., remained alive. The great nobles placed him upon the throne, and ruled in his name. But the restless genius of Fredegonda did not sit down contentedly with loss of power; and in retirement and disgrace she could still wield her peculiar weapons of intrigue and assassination. She hired two clerks to attempt the assassination of the rival queen, Brunhilda, and her son; and a strange and weird character is given to the incident when we read that she gave them some drug to take before they made the attempt, as Indians produce a bloodthirsty recklessness by eating *bhang;* and that she promised, if they failed and were slain, to have abundant masses said for their souls.

Another revenge was more successful. Chilperic had had Bishop Pretextatus tried, for his offence in marrying Merowig to Brunhilda, deposed and banished; but on the death of Chilperic he returned and resumed his see. Fredegonda sent one of her servants to Rouen, who, concealing himself in the sacrarium of the cathedral, on the morning of Easter-day, stabbed the bishop mortally while he was engaged at the altar in the celebration of the Eucharist. King Guntram, as head of the Merovingian family, thought himself called upon to bring the queen to justice, and sent three bishops on an embassy to the nobles who ruled in the

name of the young Clothaire, to demand an inquiry into the murder of Pretextatus, and threaten war in case of refusal. But nothing came of it. Some neighbouring Franks, indignant at the crime, rode to the villa of Fredegonda, and one of their number went in and formally summoned her to take her trial before the Mâl; but the overbold accuser was persuaded to drink a cup of wine before he departed, and fell down in the agonies of death. The political ability of Fredegonda enabled her shortly to recover her influence in the councils of the young king her son.

On the death of King Guntram, A.D. 593, Childebert of Austrasia succeeded to his dominions; this accession of power seems to have inspired him with the desire and hope of obtaining the sole sovereignty of the Franks, and he attacked his cousin Clothaire. But his attempt to seize Soissons was foiled by the skill and conduct of Fredegonda, and a bloody and indecisive battle left the situation unchanged.

Three years afterwards Childebert died, at the age of twenty-six, poisoned, together with his wife Faileuba. His eldest son, Theodebert, though illegitimate, succeeded peaceably to Austrasia, and Theodoric the younger, only nine years of age, received Burgundy and some other territories, with Orleans, as his capital. Thus Queen Brunhilda, as guardian of her grandchildren, became again the virtual ruler of the greater part of the Frankish Empire, while Neustria was again under the in-

fluence of her implacable enemy and hated rival, Queen Fredegonda.

Under such auspices peace was not likely to continue long; but the war had only just begun when (A.D. 597) the fierce hatred of one of the rivals, Fredegonda, was stilled by the hand of death.

If we believe one-half of the stories which her contemporary, Gregory of Tours, relates of her—as it were incidentally, and without any appearance of antipathy or passion—we must ascribe to Fredegonda a character unsurpassed by either sex in the history of the world for cruelty and baseness. The mistress of Chilperic, she waded through the blood of the ill-fated Galeswintha to the king's marriage-bed; and was the evil genius of the king, over whom, notwithstanding a score of infidelities, she never lost the sway which her beauty, talent, and energy gave her. She saved herself and him by the assassination of Sigebert; she sought once and again by the same means the life of Brunhilda and her son. She compassed the death of her step-son, Clovis; she half strangled her own daughter. She procured the murder of Bishop Pretextatus, then handed over the assassin to the vengeance of the bishop's friends, and poisoned the overbold freeman who ventured to summon her to trial. When Count Lendaste was dying of his wounds, she would not let him die in peace, but had him laid on the ground, with his neck placed on a log of wood and then beaten till the little remains of life were tortured out of him. We do not care

to pick out of the history all the murders of which she is accused. She brought false accusations against all who displeased her. She ground the people with taxes. "A moiety of her crimes would suffice to make her the Messalina and Borgia of her age." She has extorted from posterity its admiration and execration.

The Austrasian nobles, though for a time kept in check by the vigour and skill of Brunhilda, had never ceased from their intrigues, and in a couple of years (A.D. 599) they succeeded so far as to procure the banishment of the queen from her grandson Theodebert's court at Metz. Like another Lear, she took refuge with her other grandson, Theodoric of Burgundy, and there followed no break of friendly intercourse between the two brothers in consequence. She is accused by some of the historians of encouraging the vices of Theodoric in order that she might rule; but the same historians show that Theodoric required no encouragement to vice. It may well be that the aged queen neglected the hopeless task of trying to control the vicious life of a Merovingian prince, and incurred the ill will and ill report of those about him by taking care, at least, of the royal interests.

The two brothers united their arms against Clothaire, and dispossessed him of the greater part of his dominions. And they also waged a successful campaign against the Wascones (Gascons), in the south-western corner of their empire. Then,

in the seventeenth year of their reign (A.D. 612), the brothers disagreed. Theodebert began a war for the transfer of Alsace and Lorraine to his dominion. Theodoric, however, was victorious. Theodebert was taken prisoner and sent to Châlons, where, soon afterwards, he and his infant son were put to death. Theodoric of Burgundy thus added the whole of Austrasia to his dominions; and he proceeded to make war on Clothaire for the conquest of Neustria. But on the eve of battle he died, at the age of twenty-six, leaving four sons.

Queen Brunhilda did not wait for an election to the vacant throne by the assembly of the people, she did not divide the royalty among the infant children of Theodoric; but, taking the course which seemed best calculated to maintain the royal power, she placed Sigebert, the eldest of the royal children, on his father's throne, and would once more have resumed the rule over the greater part of the Frank Empire in the name of her great-grandchild.

But the party of the nobles, headed by Pepin of Landen, and Arnulph, Bishop of Metz,* took measures to turn the crisis to the advantage of their own political party. They entered into negotiations with Clothaire, offering to elect him king of Austrasia and Burgundy, and so to make him sovereign of the whole empire. Clothaire accepted the invitation; collected troops, and took the field. The queen summoned the forces of Austrasia, and

* One apparently representing the Frank race and the lay nobles, the other the influence of the Church and the Latin race.

marched against him. When the two armies met face to face (A.D. 613), that of Austrasia mutinied and marched away without striking a blow, and the Austrasian royal family was given up to Clothaire. Two of the children were killed; one escaped, and is no more heard of; the youngest, being Clothaire's godson, was spared. The aged queen, now seventy years old, was exposed on a camel to the derision of the camp; and then, bound hand and foot to a vicious horse, was dragged and trampled to death. It was one of those horrible events which characterize the outbreak of the pent-up vengeance of a political party against an antagonist whose ability has long delayed their triumph.

The character of Queen Brunhilda has been the subject of much dispute. At the time of her marriage, every one * praised her beauty, her talents and accomplishments, and her graciousness. Her energy and political ability are beyond dispute. Gregory the Great † corresponded with her, and he praises her Christian devotion, uprightness of heart, skill in government, and the careful education she bestowed upon her children. The desire of vengeance against Chilperic and Fredegonda, the murderers of her sister, no doubt influenced her conduct. Called upon to rule over a fierce people when intrigue and violence were the modes of ruling, contending against a domestic faction of

* Fortunatus and Gregory of Tours.

† Op. Omnia (Paris, 1705), vi. Ep. 5.

turbulent, unscrupulous nobles, doubtless many deeds were done by her command which we may palliate, but which we cannot justify. "Yet through the dark veil which hostile chroniclers have thrown over her character, many traces may be descried of what is noble, generous, and even tender in her disposition."* Such an impression of her power and genius did she leave on the minds of men, that in after times everything great in the Austrasian kingdom—roads, towers, fortresses—were assigned by legend to Brunhilda.

The antagonism of Brunhilda and Fredegonda is certainly one of the strangest chapters in the whole course of history; and it is one of the mysteries of Providence that Fredegonda should have died peacefully in her bed, and Brunhilda a death of torture and ignominy.

Clothaire had thus, in the twenty-first year of a reign hitherto marked by many vicissitudes, become sole king of the Franks. But the royal power had entered upon a new phase. It was not Clothaire who had conquered Austrasia, it was the faction of the nobles who had successfully asserted their power both in Austrasia and Neustria. Duke Werner stipulated that he should be nominated Mayor of the Palace for life in Burgundy. Clothaire's young son Dagobert was made King of Austrasia, and Arnulph and Pepin ruled in his name; and even in Neustria the principal functions

* Percy's, "The Franks."

of government were wielded by the Major Domus. The nature of the revolution is shown in the fact that in the course of the following year (A.D. 614 or 615), a general assembly of the nobles of the kingdom, ecclesiastical * and lay, was held in Paris. It was not one of the ordinary assemblies of the people in the Champ de Mai; it was a special council of the nobility of the whole kingdom, who came to formulate the conditions on which they had accepted Clothaire as their king. The canons and edicts agreed upon by the council, and promulgated in the name of the king, were a kind of Magna Charta intended to protect the Church and the people from the abuses of royal power. We can only note two or three of them. The people were protected from the oppression of alien and irresponsible officials by the decree, that the officers who administered the provincial governments should be chosen out of the places submitted to their authority; and should be answerable out of their own property for abuses of their office. The Church, seeking to protect itself from the evil of royal nominations to benefices, obtained a formal concession by the crown of the right of canonical election of bishops by the clergy and people, with the assent of the comprovincial bishops and the confirmation of the metropolitan; but the crown still retained a right of confirmation, and even a reservation of the privilege of recommendation of a candidate.

The most important of all the concessions extorted

* Seventy-nine bishops were present.

by the nobles from the crown, was the election of the Mayors of the Palace, who had gradually come to fill the functions known in later French history by the name of Minister. Warnacher, the Mayor of Burgundy, and Rade, the Mayor of Austrasia, had stipulated with Clothaire for their tenure of office for life. It was, therefore, only after the death of Rade that his office passed to Pepin of Landen.

That the interests of the lower classes of the people were not forgotten, is seen in a decree which made the bishops the protectors of enfranchised slaves.

It may be desirable to say, in elucidation of the importance of this latter enactment, that slavery occupied a large place in the constitution of the society of the time. The domestic institution, which formed the very basis of Roman society, was not directly interfered with by the barbarians who settled in Gaul; those who were slaves before they came, continued slaves after they had come. Slavery existed from the first among the barbarians themselves. The prisoners taken in the constant wars of the time were all condemned to servitude. On the other hand, the condition of slaves was being gradually changed into that of serfs. And the Church preached the duty of kindness to slaves, and encouraged their emancipation as a meritorious action. Constantine the Great first gave the Church a kind of official guardianship over this most helpless class of the community, and the formal recognition of it by this Council of Paris would strengthen

the hands of the bishop or the priest when he intervened between the oppressor and the oppressed.

Clothaire II. occupied the throne of Neustria for half a century, not without ability and dignity. The almost contemporary anonymous author of the "Gesta Dagoberti" says of him that he was remarkable for patience, learned, God-fearing, a great benefactor to the churches and clergy, generous in alms to the poor, gracious to all, and full of pity, but too much given to hunting wild beasts. Eligius, his famous goldsmith and mintmaster, calls him *mansuetus*—gracious. "Gracious" and "remarkable for patience" as he may have been, yet the chronicler Aimon,* a monk of Fleury, records an anecdote of him which proves that he still had the fierce Frankish spirit in him:—

When Clothaire had made his son, Dagobert, King of Austrasia, at the age of nineteen, the young king commenced hostilities against Bertoald, Duke of the Saxons; and in a combat with the duke, he received a sword-stroke in the head, which cut away a piece of his helmet and a lock of his flowing hair with it. Dagobert sent these tokens by a messenger, demanding reinforcements from his father. The messenger happily found Clothaire hunting in the forest of Ardennes. Sending some of his attendants to bring up troops, he set off at once with the rest who happened to be with him, and travelling night and day, appeared unexpectedly in the Frankish camp, on the bank of the Weser, which divided them from the

* Lib vi. c. 18.

Saxons. The Franks welcomed the arrival of the king with loud shouts. Duke Bertoald, riding to the water's edge, asked the cause of their rejoicing. They told him of the arrival of the King Clothaire. Bertoald replied that they dreamed that which they desired, for he had intelligence that Clothaire was dead. Clothaire, who was sitting on horseback on the hither bank, hearing Bertoald's words, silently took off his helmet, and exposed to the sight of all the long locks of the Merovingian race, now white with age, so that all recognized the presence of the king; who still kept silence, the more to impress his foes with fear. Bertoald cried to him across the river, "It is you, then, wild beast (*bestia*), who stand silent there." The king, enraged at this insult, replaced his casque, put spurs to his horse, and plunged into the river. The Franks hastened to cross after him. Arrived on the other bank, the king rode at the duke, who turned and fled, crying that he acknowledged Clothaire as his master and lord; that he was the most humble of his servants; that however the affair finished it would be lamentable, either that so clement a master should kill his slave, or that the slave should kill his master. But the old warrior still pursued his foe in grim silence, till, getting within reach, he slew him, cut off his head, and carried it back to his son and the other Franks, who were hastening, full of fear, to support him.*

After a reign of half a century, Clothaire died in

* "Etudes Historique sur le VII. Siècle," by Ch. Barthélemy.

the year A.D. 628. Dagobert allowed to his younger brother Charibert the kingship of the fair province of Aquitaine, whose government his descendants retained long after the Merovingian dynasty had lost the throne of the Franks.

The reign of Dagobert in Austrasia, under the able guardianship of Arnulf and Pepin, had been a successful one. On his succession to the Neustrian kingdom he took up his residence at Paris, and there a change seems to have come over his character. It was probably the result of the transition from the rude Teutonic court and people of Austrasia to the cultivated and corrupting Latin civilization of Neustria, and the exchange of the dominating influence of Arnulf and Pepin for the adulation of the courtiers of the Latin kingdom, acting upon a disposition inclined to magnificence and gaiety. St. Ouen, who knew him well, describes him (in his life of St. Eligius) as ardent, handsome, renowned, so that there was none like him among all the former Frankish kings. ("Rex Dagobertus, torrens, pulcher, inclytus, ita ut nullus ei similes fuerit in cunctis retro Francorum regibus.")

He became magnificent in his expenditure, luxurious in his habits, abounding in his gallantries. At the same time he encouraged learning and art. Some of the most saintly men of the time were attached to his court; the famous St. Eligius was an inmate of his palace, and honoured with his friendship for twenty years. He founded the abbey of St. Denis, and was a great benefactor

to the Churches. Among the contemporary kings of Europe there was not one who was a more powerful and magnificent prince. The Parisians liked the gay, free-handed king whose expenditure enriched as his magnificence dazzled them, and "the good King Dagobert" lives to this day in the popular legends of France.

In the latter part of his reign, some hostilities with the barbarian tribes on the Eastern frontier of the Frankish dominions were waged with ill success, and the safety of the Eastern kingdom was menaced. We see the power of the Austrasian nobles again showing itself in the fact that at this crisis Dagobert nominated his infant son Sigebert as King of Austrasia, and placed him under the guardianship of Cunibert, Bishop of Cologne, who had succeeded Arnulf as one of the leaders of the party of the nobles.

Two years before his death, at the assembly of the Champ de Mai, in the presence of his two sons, and of the bishops and nobles and people present, Dagobert published his will, leaving great benefactions to the Church. Historians have gladly assumed that this betokened repentance of the faults which had sullied his character.

On the death of Dagobert, in A.D. 637, he was succeeded in Neustria by his son, Clovis II. But Dagobert is commonly regarded by historians as the last of the Merovingians who exercised anything like an independent authority, and all his successors are stigmatized as *Rois fainéants*. The death of

Brunhilda was the beginning of the constitutional limitation of the royal power of the Merovingian kings, and the conquest of the mayoralty by Charles Martel may be regarded as the real commencement of the Carolingian sovereignty. But the passage from the one condition to the other was probably more gradual than is commonly represented. Grimoald is described as paying great personal deference to the king, and strenuously maintaining the royal prerogative. St. Dagobert II. and St. Clovis, at least, were not men incapacitated by a life of luxury. The history, in brief, is that the nobles forced on the Crown an elective minister; the family of the minister was powerful enough to make the office hereditary; the hereditary minister gradually thrust the king more and more into the background; and at last, at the end of a century and a half, was able to thrust him from his throne. What underlies and largely helps to explain the whole story is the unprecedented fact that there should have been in one family a succession of men of such genius and ambition as Pepin the Elder and Arnulf (joint guardians of the Austrasian kingdom, and connected by the marriage of their children), Grimoald, Pepin of Heristal, Carl Martel, and Pepin the king. We must bear in mind that the current estimate of the *Rois fainéants* is derived chiefly from Carolingian writers. But we catch glimpses here and there, in lives of saints and the like works, which deal with the same period, which show us that the whole history would bear a different aspect if told from the

Merovingian point of view. We, however, need not enter into the details of the history. It is enough for our purpose to give the briefest statement of the subsequent history of the Merovingian kings.

Clovis II. married Bathildis, who is interesting to us as a captive Anglo-Saxon princess whom the king saw in the house of his Mayor, loved, and married. Sigebert II. of Austrasia died childless in A.D. 654, and Clovis II. placed his son Childeric II. on the throne. Clovis himself died in the following year, A.D. 655, and the Queen Bathildis showed that to the virtues of Radegunda she united something of the talent of Brunhilda, for on the king's death she successfully ruled Neustria as the guardian of her son Clothaire III.

In A.D. 664, under the nominal king of Neustria, Clothaire III., the mayor of the palace was Ebroin; that of Austrasia, under the nominal king, Childeric II., was Wulfoald. Clothaire III. dying in A.D. 670, not yet twenty years of age, Ebroin immediately placed on the throne the third son of Clovis II., viz. Theodoric III., that he might continue to rule in his name. But the principal men of Neustria and Burgundy, who had not been consulted by Ebroin, went over to Childeric II., and put an army in the field. Theodoric III. and Ebroin were reduced to take sanctuary in the churches, and then to receive the monastic tonsure, and enter, one into the monastery of St. Denis, the other into that of Luxeuil. In 675 Childeric II., who had made himself odious to his nobles, was massacred with

his wife and one of his children under age. His brother Theodoric III. was raised to the throne of Neustria by the very same persons who had dethroned him and shut him up in the monastery of St. Denis. Austrasia recalled from England Dagobert II., son of St. Sigebert, to whom St. Wilfred had given a generous hospitality. In 674 Ebroin also came out of his monastery, and proclaimed a pretended son of Clothaire III., under the name of Clovis. At the end of a year, he caused this pretender to disappear, reconciled himself with Theodoric, whom he caused to be recognized as king in Neustria and Burgundy, reserving to himself the real sovereignty. In 679 Dagobert II. was put to death by the faction of Ebroin, who was himself assassinated by a Frank lord whose destruction he had resolved upon. In 687 the Duke Pepin of Austrasia gained a decisive victory at Testri over the army of Neustria, and made Theodoric III. prisoner. He then effected a settlement of the empire by recognizing Theodoric as sole king, on condition that he himself should be recognized as sole mayor. It was the triumph of the mayors of Austrasia over those of Neustria; it was the triumph of the mayoralty over the crown. "From this time forward," says the chronicler Erchambert, "the kings began to have only the royal name and not the royal dignity."

Eginhard gives a graphic and touching picture of the prince when the later kings had really become *Rois fainéants*:—"All that remained of royalty to

the descendant of Clovis," he says, "was the title of king, the flowing hair and long beard, and the throne on which he sat as the representative of the Frank monarchy, giving audience to foreign ambassadors, and repeating to them the answers which had been previously dictated to him. Besides, he possessed only an insecure pension, and a single estate which supplied him with a habitation and a small number of servants. If he travelled, it was in a car drawn by a team of oxen which an ox-herd drove with his goad: it was thus that he travelled once a year to the palace, to play his part in the general assembly of the people which met for the consideration of public affairs. The administration of the kingdom, both as to its internal and external affairs, was entirely in the hands of the mayor of the palace.

CHAPTER VII.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL HISTORY.

Planting of the Church in Gaul—Increase in the reign of Decius—Council of Arles—Metropolitan organization—Beginnings of the patriarchal authority of the Roman See—Work of St. Martin of Tours—Relations of the British and Gallic Churches—Cæsarius of Arles—The position of the bishops—Of the counts—All the clergy Latins—Gradual introduction of Franks—The monastic institution introduced by St. Martin at Ligugé—By Cassian at Marseilles—By Honoratus at Lerins—Spreads over Gaul—Revived by St. Benedict—Description of a monastery of monks—Account of the possessions of St. Riquier—Monasteries of women—Relations of the Church of Gaul with that of Saxon England.

CHRISTIANITY appears to have been introduced into Gaul from Smyrna, by way of Marseilles and the great water-way of the Rhone, apparently about the middle of the second century, when the interesting story of the martyrs of Vienne first gives us a glimpse of the Churches, apparently recently established, of the ancient city of Vienne and the neighbouring town of Lyons. The martyred Bishop

Pothinus was succeeded in the see of Vienne by the illustrious Father of the Church, Irenæus, the pupil of Polycarp, who was the disciple of the Apostle St. John.

Gregory of Tours tells us * the tradition of his day that in the reign of Decius, *i.e.* about the middle of the third century, seven missionaries set out from Rome for the conversion of Gaul, and founded seven sees. Some of the particulars which Gregory gives are inconsistent with known facts, but there probably was a missionary movement at this period which strengthened and extended the Church in Gaul. It is probably to an extension of this missionary movement across the Channel that we owe the first planting of the Church in Britain. The close relations of our own Church with that of Gaul, though such scanty records of them have come down to us, give us an additional interest in the history of the Gallic Church. By the beginning of the fourth century more than twenty bishops may be counted in Gaul.† The great council of the West, which Constantine summoned to determine the Donatist controversy, was held at Arles; and the signatures of the bishops present give us the names of the principal bishops of Gaul, and include three from distant Britain.

At this time the Churches of the south of Gaul were disturbed by a controversy which has con-

* Book I. § 28.

† De Broglie, "L'Eglise et l'Empire," vol. ii. p. 95.

siderable interest as an illustration of the principles of Church organization. Constantius, Bishop of Arles, claimed for himself the dignity and rights of primate and metropolitan of the province, instead of Simplicius, the Bishop of Vienne, on the ground that the Prefect of Gaul had lately removed his residence and seat of government from the latter city to the former, and that the bishop of the metropolitan city was of right the metropolitan bishop. The question was considered at a synod of the bishops of Gaul, assembled at Turin, A.D. 397. The reasons alleged by Constantius not appearing clear, the synod decided provisionally that he of the two bishops who could prove his city to be the metropolis should have the primacy over the province, and that in the mean time each should have jurisdiction over the Churches nearest his capital. The decision recognized the important principle that the organization of the Church is not to be tied up by ancient precedents, but is to be modified and adapted to the exigencies of times and circumstances.

A little later we find Bishop Celedonius endeavouring to escape sentence of deposition at the hands of Hilary, Bishop of Arles, by pleading that his see of Besançon was in the jurisdiction of Vienne, and not in that of Arles. Celedonius sought the interposition of Zosimus, the Bishop of Rome, who gladly entertained all such recourses to the growing authority of the see, and—is it too much to say?—seems to have encouraged them by usually taking

the side of the appellants. Similar appeals were made to the same pope from the African Church by Cœlestius and Pelagius, and by Apiarius.* These incidents serve to mark the early stage of the growth of the Papal power; bishops were beginning to appeal to the Bishop of Rome against their own metropolitans, and the bishops of Rome were beginning to assume a right to hear and determine such appeals; and the fact that such illustrious Fathers of the Church as Hilary in the one case, and Augustine in the other, entirely declined to recognize any such right of appeal, and formally refused to accept the decision of the Roman prelate, is enough to prove that no such authority in the Roman See had hitherto been recognized in the constitution of the Church. We note in these incidents the first strong ripple which marks the existence, and strength, and direction of a current of religious thought and ecclesiastical tendency, which gains strength and volume as it flows down the stream of our history—the patriarchal authority of the Roman See. At a later period of the history we shall see the beginnings of the temporal power of the Roman See. The two together formed the basis of the mediæval Papacy.

In the middle of the fourth century, so great an impulse was given to the spread of Christianity in Gaul by the labours of St. Martin, as to have won

* See Augustine: "Fathers for English Readers," S.P.C.K., pp. 201 and 212.

for him the title of the "Apostle of Gaul." The story of his work shows that the worship of the deities of the ancient mythology still, down to his time, prevailed more or less throughout the country.

In the course of another century, however—that is, by the time that the disruption of the empire began—the whole of Gaul seems to have been Christianized, and bishops were seated in most of its cities. Clovis, in the last year of his reign (A.D. 511), summoned a council at Orleans, which was attended by forty-four bishops.

Cæsarius, elected Bishop of Arles A.D. 502, was the greatest Gallic bishop of his time, and of all Gallic bishops was second only to Irenæus, Martin, and Hilary. He lived through the political changes which transferred Southern Gaul from the Visigoths to the Franks, and down into the reign of Childebert. Himself a scholar of the monastery of Lerins, he drew up a Rule for monks, and a Rule for virgins for a convent over which his sister Cæsaria presided.

We mention Germanus, Bishop of Auxerre, Lupus, Bishop of Troyes, and Severus, Bishop of Treves, among the most distinguished Gallic prelates of the fifth century, only because they took part in events which show the intimate relations which existed between the British Church and the Gallic Church from which it probably derived its existence. The Pelagian heresy had spread to such an extent, or was so influentially supported, in Britain, that

the orthodox party sent to the Church of Gaul to ask help to combat the heresy. A synod of Gallic bishops deputed the two former bishops in 429 to go and lend the weight of their learning and reputation to the support of the truth. At a synod of British bishops, which seems to have been held at Verulam, their arguments and their authority seem to have silenced the heretical party for a time; but in 447 Germanus and Severus, afterwards Bishop Treves (Lupus having died in the mean time), paid a second visit to Britain on a similar errand.

The bishops of the Church at this time held a great position in the society of their times. Not only did the bishop hold a position of great spiritual influence in his city as the acknowledged head and ruler of the whole civic community, regarded in its highest aspect as a Christian Church, but other functions of a civil nature had in process of time become attached to his office, and had greatly added to his authority. He was in some sense the chief magistrate of his city. For the early Christians, acting upon the precept of St. Paul, not to go to law before the unbelievers (1 Cor. vi. 1–6), had made a practice of referring their disputes instead to the arbitration of their bishops. Christian emperors had recognized the custom, and given legal force to these episcopal decisions. We learn, in reading Augustine's addresses to his people of Hippo,* that a considerable portion of a

* Augustine: "Fathers for English Readers," S.P.C.K., p. 169.

bishop's time was taken up with the fulfilment of these judicial functions.

Again, something of the old power which the Tribune of the People possessed, to interpose between the people and the ordinary magistrates, had fallen upon the bishops. The opinion of the times deemed it a proper exercise of their sacred function to interpose on behalf of any one they thought oppressed, and even to seek remission of the punishment of those who had been justly condemned. His house, his person, had privilege of sanctuary; his interposition on behalf of a criminal usually obtained his pardon, or at least some mitigation of his punishment. In the centuries of which we write, the bishop was regarded as the official protector of his people against the Frankish part of the population.

Another obvious cause of the great position of the bishops of the time of which we are speaking is the great wealth of their sees. Not only did they derive a large income from the tithes and offerings of the people, but many of the more important sees possessed estates so large as to place the bishops among the great landowners of the country. Some of these estates were the benefactions of pious donors, both Roman and Frank;* but the bulk of the wealth of the sees had arisen from the

* Clovis, after his conversion, gave the Church of Rheims lands in Belgium, Thuringia, Austrasia, Septimania, and Aquitaine. The Church of Besançon was a sovereignty; its archbishop had for liege-men the Viscount of Besançon, the Seigneurs of Salm, Montfaucon, Montferrand, Durnes, Montbeliard, and St. Seine; the

custom for wealthy bishops to bequeath their private possessions to their Churches. This is sufficiently illustrated in the brief biographical notices which Gregory gives us of his predecessors in the see of Tours. Thus he tells us that Perpetuus, the seventh bishop, a man of senatorial family, was very rich, and possessed property in many cities; he left all that he possessed to Churches, and particularly to that of Tours. He was succeeded by a relation, Volusinius, who was also very rich. Verus, the eighth bishop, left his possessions to the Churches and to his servants. The eleventh bishop, Dinifius, received largesses from the royal treasury, the greater part of which he gave to his Church. The twelfth, Ommatius, of senatorial family, was very rich in lands; he left his lands to the Churches of the cities in which they were situated. Thus the see of Tours, at the time when Gregory wrote, had been endowed with wide possessions of at least four "rich," and "very rich," senatorial families, besides donations from other sources.

Last, but not least important, these great positions were usually at this time occupied by men of the highest mark. The election to a vacant see rested in the clergy and laity of the city itself, and it had become the custom for the city to look round for some layman of high rank, wealth, and character, and by the gentle moral compulsion which was

Count of Burgundy held the Seigneuries of Gray, Vesoul, and Choze of the Archbishopric of Besançon (Chateaubriand, "Analyse Raisonné de l'Histoire de France, Seconde Race").

customary at the time, to force upon him the office and duties of their spiritual Lord. It would be easy to draw up a considerable list of bishops of this period who were of the highest families, and had held the highest offices in the state, not excepting the Imperial office itself,* and who had not thought it unbecoming to spend the latter portion of their lives in the episcopate. Men of such rank and character could not but add greatly to the prestige of the episcopal dignity in the eyes of the whole people.

When we put all this together—the sacred character of the bishop, his great wealth, that he administered justice in his city and ruled his wide estates, coined money, was the recognized patron and protector of the Latin race against the Frank, and when we call to mind that the Latins were still under the Imperial law, and that the king was especially the king of the Franks—we shall see that King Childeric had some reason in the complaint, which Gregory of Tours says he was accustomed to make, that the wealth of the people was diverted from the royal treasury into the coffers of the Church, and that the bishops were more of kings than he was.

On the other hand, the Bishop's authority in the city was limited by the authority of the Count. The count was an officer with military attributes and dictatorial power, whom the Frank kings appointed in every important city to guard the royal interests and collect the royal revenue, without any care to

* See note, p. 17.

regulate his functions and harmonize them with the ancient municipal institutions. The bishop and the count were thus pitted against one another in every city, each with large, ill-defined power. One the chief of the more numerous Latin community, the other the representative of the dominant Frankish power. Probably in many cases the bishop was of better family, of greater wealth, and of far more influence with the citizens than the count. The count, on the other hand, represented the royal prerogative, with all its vague terrors. Happily for the citizens, there was no royal garrison; the count had only the handful of attendants whom he could entertain in his own house. Gregory of Tours has given us a very complete and graphic story of his own relations as bishop of the great city of Tours, with Leudaste the count. When the count is seeking office he "shows himself humble and submissive to Gregory, often swearing upon the shrine of the saint (Martin of Tours) that he would never do anything contrary to the laws of reason, and that he would be faithful to the bishop in all things as well in his private affairs as in those of the Church." "But when he was fairly established in his office he was so filled with pride that he would enter the episcopal house clad in cuirass and corselet, armed with lance and bow, and with his casque on his head, having confidence in nobody because he was everybody's enemy." "When he sat as judge with the chief people of the place, whether laymen or clerics, if any man stood up for his own rights,

immediately he went into a rage, and vomited forth insults against the citizens. He caused priests to be brought before him bound, and soldiers to be beaten with rods, and committed so many cruelties that one could hardly narrate them." He committed many wrongs against Gregory, and plundered the goods of the Church; and at length entered into a wicked plot, seeking by false witnesses to move the king against the bishop and to get him deprived.*

The king, Chilperic, summoned Gregory to trial before a synod of bishops at his own palace of Braine, and one incident of the synod is that Venantius Fortunatus read an inaugural poem to the assembled Fathers.

The plot recoiled on the heads of the intriguers. Leudaste was deprived of his office, and finally was seized and slain (as we have elsewhere had occasion to mention †) by order of Fredegonda; and the citizens of Tours were allowed by Chilperic to choose his successor.

We have many other notices of the relations of the bishops and counts. Maracarius, Count of Angoulême, sought and obtained the episcopal see of his city, but soon after was poisoned, and Fronto, his successor in the see, was accused of the crime. Martin, the nephew of Maracarius, obtained the countship in order to avenge his uncle's death. Fronto, after a few months' tenure of the see, had been succeeded by Heraclius. The count accused Heraclius of retaining in his service men who had been guilty

* Lib. v. 49. † See p. 70.

of his uncle's death, and of entertaining at his table priests who had been implicated in the affair. The enmity between them increased. The count began, by little and little, to seize by violence the domains which Maracarius had left his Church by his testament, pretending that they ought not to be retained by a Church whose clergy had killed the testator. He slew some laymen, and at length seized and killed a clerk, whom he accused of being accomplices in the murder. The bishop then interdicted the count from entering the doors of the church.

Before a synod of bishops assembled at Saintes, Martin demanded to be reconciled with Heraclius. He promised to restore the Church estates he had seized, and to humble himself before the minister of the Lord. Heraclius assented. But Martin only kept the word of promise to the ear; he despoiled the estates and razed the buildings, saying that if the Church would have them back it should find them waste. Heraclius interdicted him anew. Then Heraclius died. Martin obtained restoration to communion from other bishops.* But a few months afterwards the count also died in torments, recognizing them as the punishment of his treatment of the bishop. Gregory concludes his story with the moral, "Let all, then, wonder, and fear to injure bishops. For God avenges His servants who trust in Him." †

At Gevaudan, Palladius, son of the former Count

* The Church in those days seems to have very easily restored men guilty of the greatest crimes. † Gregory, v. 37.

Brittien, was raised by Sigebert to the office of count. Discord arose between him and Bishop Parthenius, and excited great enmities among the people; for he assailed the bishop with outrages and affronts and injuries, seized the goods of the Church, and plundered its servants. The count and the bishop appeared before the king. Next year Palladius was deprived, committed suicide, and was not buried with Christians, nor were masses said for him.*

In the earlier years after the conquest, all ranks of the clergy were filled by Gallo-Romans. The Franks were the dominant race, and were Christian, but they were new converts from a rude heathenism, and it would take some generations to raise up a "native ministry" among them. Not only the literature of the (Western) Church, but all its services, and, still more, the conversational intercourse of all civilized and Christian people, was in Latin. Besides, the Franks were warriors, a conquering caste, a separate nation; and to lay down battle-axe and spear, and enter into the peaceful ranks of the Romano-Gallic Church, would have seemed to them like exchanging their nationality for that of the more highly cultured, perhaps, but, in their eyes, subject race.

The Frank kings did not ignore the value of education. Clovis is said to have established a Palatine school, and encouraged his young men to qualify themselves for the positions which his con-

* Gregory, v. 40.

quests had opened out to them. His grandsons, we have seen, prided themselves on their Latin culture. After a while, Franks aspired to the magnificent positions which the great sees of the Church offered to their ambition; and we find men with Teutonic names, and no doubt of Teutonic race, among the bishops. For example, Gregory of Tours gives us a list of the bishops who met in synod at Paris, for the trial of Pretextatus, and the names give us a clue to the proportion of Franks who by that time had been placed in the sees of his kingdom by Chilperic.* The list is as follows:—Of Gauls, Gregory of Tours, Felix of Nantes, Dumnolus of Le Mans, Honoratus of Amiens, Ætherius of Lisieux, and Pappolus of Chartres; of Franks, Raghenemod of Paris, Leudovald of Bayeux, Romhaire of Coutance, Merovig of Poitiers, Malulf of Senlis, and Berthramn of Bordeaux.

For a still longer period, few Franks entered into the lower ranks of the Church. Not only did the priesthood offer little temptation to them, but also the policy of the kings and nobles opposed the diminution of their military strength by refusing leave to their Franks to enter into holy orders or into the monasteries. The cultured families of the cities would afford an ample supply of men for the clergy, and promising youths of a lower class seem

* It is to be borne in mind that Gregory tells us that few clerks were promoted by Chilperic; *i.e.* that he overruled the canonical mode of election, and arbitrarily nominated to most of the sees which fell vacant in his reign. See p. 56.

already not infrequently to have been educated for the service of the Church. It was only in a later period, when some approach had been made to a fusion of the races, that we find Franks entering into the lower ranks of the Church, and simultaneously we find Gallo-Romans in the ranks of the armies.

There was a wide gulf between the bishops and the other orders of the clergy. The bishops were powerful nobles, almost the kings of the Gallo-Roman cities; the habitual counsellors of the kings, their names appear before those of the nobles and counsellors in the royal edicts. We see them acting as the guardians and regents of a minority; we find them at the head of the faction of nobles which controlled the royal power. Monks wielded a powerful spiritual influence. But the name of not a single priest appears in the history of the times as exercising any influence or authority. When at length, in the latter part of the Merovingian period, the bishops were little other than great nobles, with little of episcopal spirit in them, they regarded their clergy as the nobles did their *homines*—their "men,"—as bound to obey them and support their interests in secular matters. At length, simoniacal appointments to the great offices of the Church became largely prevalent; a worldly character in the prelates was an inevitable consequence; and that as naturally led to clerical neglect; and that, again, to a general religious deadness.

Under the gradual secularization of the Church in the Merovingian period, the monasteries had the greatest share in keeping alive a remnant of vital religion among the people; and in the gradual decay of learning and art, the monastic institution was the ark in which the ancient civilization survived the deluge of barbarism, and emerged at length to spread itself over the modern world.

St. Martin introduced the monastic institution into Gaul at Ligugé, near Poitiers. When the bishopric of Tours was forced upon him, he founded another house at Marmoutier, on the bank of the Loire, a mile above the city, where a cliff of rocks on one side and a bend of the Loire on the other enclosed a little span of meadow between rock and river; and there he lived among eighty monks, some dwelling in caves in the rocks, some in wattled huts in the meadow. These two monasteries continued to be the capitals of ascetic religion in Aquitaine. So rapidly did the ascetic spirit spread, that when Martin died two thousand monks followed him to his grave; and so great was his reputation, that his shrine became the most famous place of pilgrimage in France.

Some years later, the monastery of St. Victor was founded at Marseilles by Cassian (A.D. 350–447). Its founder had been a pupil of Chrysostom, afterwards a monk in the monastery of Jerome at Bethlehem. He is one of the great writers on the ascetic life; his "Institutes," describing the regulations and

observances of the Eastern monks, formed one of the chief text-books of Western monachism in subsequent ages. In the Pelagian controversy, the theologians of Marseilles were learned enough and self-reliant enough to take a line of their own, between the views of Augustine on one hand, and those of Pelagius on the other; the Augustinians called it semi-Pelagianism, but it is possible that the disciples of Cassian were really maintaining the ancient Catholic views on the subjects under discussion.

Honoratus, in A.D. 410, founded another famous monastery at Lerins, one of a group of rocky islets off the southern coast of Gaul, opposite the well-known modern watering-place of Cannes. It was from the monasteries of Marseilles and Lerins, illustrious throughout Christendom for learning and piety, that the Churches of Gaul in the fifth century drew their most famous bishops and priests.

From these centres monasteries gradually spread over the provinces of southern Gaul, and formed, as it were, oases of learning and piety and peace amidst the confusion and turbulence of the times.

Romanian and Sulpicius had founded a monastery in the eastern extremity of Gaul, upon those hills of Jura which separate Gaul from Switzerland. King Sigismund rebuilt the monastery of Aja, the monastic metropolis of the kingdom of Burgundy, and himself entered into it. There, we read, nine hundred monks, divided into nine chori, kept up in their church the *Laus Perennis*—the service of

perpetual praise. There were also solitary anchorites scattered about the land, some of whom imitated, in the climate of Gaul, the wildest austerities of the solitaries of the Egyptian desert.*

At the end of the fifth century, the monasteries had ceased to send forth illustrious men to occupy the first rank as bishops and theologians; but a great revival of the institution was introduced, in the beginning of the sixth century, by the genius of St. Benedict.

St. Benedict (480–540) lived in Italy in the troubled period after the deposition of Augustulus. On the summit of a hill between Rome and Naples, crowned by a temple of Apollo, then still frequented by the neighbouring rustics, he founded the famous monastery of Monte Cassino. His piety and genius attracted a great multitude of monks from all quarters. On the other hand, Monte Cassino was like a hive, continually sending off swarms of monks to found new houses all over Europe. Many of the existing houses adopted his Rule, and sought for his monks to infuse new life into existing communities.

Under the Merovingian kings the monasteries of Gaul not only multiplied, but increased in wealth, and, as a consequence, suffered like the bishopries from being often sought by ambitious and covetous men, and being given by the king as rewards to his followers. But we must remember in both cases that the humble priests of a diocese might be good,

* Some notes of them will be found in the following chapter.

pious men, doing their duty in the streets of the city, and the villages and farmsteads of the country, although their bishop was neglecting them and living the life of a secular nobleman. And, still more, a monastery under the actual rule of a holy prior could carry on its carefully regulated life, more scandalized than harmed by the fact that its abbot, in his separate apartments, was living a very unmortified life, or was absent on one of his farms, or at court, for the greater part of the year.

"An abbey, in those times, was much the same as the dwelling of a wealthy patrician Roman, with the different classes of slaves and workmen attached to the service of the property and of the proprietor, with the towns and villages depending upon them. The abbot was the master, the monks answered to the freedmen of the master, and cultivated literature, the arts and sciences. No difference was apparent to the eye, even in the outward aspect of the abbey and its inhabitants. A monastery was, as to its architecture, a Roman house; with the atrium or cloister in the middle, with little chambers around the cloister. And since, under the later Cæsars, it had been permitted, and even ordered, to private persons to fortify their houses, a convent surrounded with embattled walls entirely resembled the more considerable Roman country houses. The habit of the monks was that of the rest of the world; it is only because the religious of the present day have retained the costume of that age that it appears so extraordinary.

"The abbey, then, was but a Roman house, but was inalienable by the ecclesiastical law, and endowed by the feudal law with a kind of sovereignty; it administered justice; it had its knights and its soldiers; it was a little state complete in all respects; and at the same time it was an experimental farm, a manufactory (they made linen and cloth), and a school.

"One can conceive nothing more favourable to the cultivation of the mind, and to individual independence, than this common life. A religious community represented an artificial family always in its manhood, which had not, like a natural family, to go through the period of helpless infancy or helpless old age; it never experienced the disadvantages of tutelage and minority, or was troubled by the inconveniences which belong to female weaknesses. This family, which never died, accumulated possessions without losing any; free from the cares of the world, it exercised a powerful influence upon it. . . .

"The monasteries became a kind of fortresses in which civilization sheltered itself under the banner of some saint; the culture of high intelligence was preserved there, and philosophic truth was reborn there of religious truth. Political truth, or liberty, found an exponent and a defender in the monk, who searched into everything, said everything, and feared nothing. Without the inviolability and the leisure of the cloister, the books and the languages of the ancient world would never have been trans-

mitted to us, and the chain which connects the past with the present would have been snapt. Astronomy, arithmetic, geometry, civil law, physic and medicine, the profane authors, grammar, and the *belles lettres*, all the arts, had a succession of professors uninterrupted from the first days of Clovis down to the age when the universities, themselves religious foundations, brought science forth from the monasteries. To establish this fact it is enough to name Alcuin, Anghilbert, Eginhard, Treghan, Loup de Ferrières, Eric d'Auxerre, Hincmar, Odo of Clugny, Cherbert, Abbon, Fulbert. Music, painting, engraving, and, above all, architecture, owe infinite obligations to the Churchmen." *

Some idea of the wealth of the monasteries may be gathered from a document which remains to us, of a little later date. In the year A.D. 831, Heric rendered to Louis le Debonnaire an account of the possessions of the abbey of St. Riquier. In the town of St. Riquier, the property of the monks, there were two thousand five hundred manses of laymen; each manse paid two pence, thirty-six bushels of wheat, of oats, and of beans, four fowls, and thirty eggs. Four mills owed three thousand quarters of mixed grain, eight pigs, and twelve cows. The market each week supplied forty sous of gold, and the toll twenty sous of gold. Thirteen bakehouses produced each yearly ten sous of gold,

* Chateaubriand, "Analyse de l'Histoire de France, Seconde Race."

three hundred loaves and thirty cakes in the time of the litanies. The benefice of St. Michael gave a revenue of five hundred sous of gold, distributed in alms by the brothers of the abbey. The chance fees for the burial of the poor and of strangers was valued, one year with another, at a hundred sous of gold, similarly distributed in alms. The abbot distributed daily to mendicants five sous of gold; he maintained three hundred poor, a hundred and fifty widows, and sixty clerks. Marriages brought in annually twenty pounds weight of silver, and the decision of lawsuits sixty-eight pounds. The street of the merchants (in the town of St. Riquier) owed the abbey every year a piece of tapestry of the value of a hundred sous of gold, and the street of the blacksmiths all the ironwork needed in the abbey. The street of the buckler-makers was bound to supply the covers of books; they covered and sewed the books, and this was estimated at thirty sous of gold. The street of the saddlers supplied saddles to the abbot and the brethren; the street of the bakers delivered a hundred loaves weekly; the street of the squires (*servientium*) was exempt from all charge. The street of the cord-wainers (shoemakers) furnished the shoes of the servants and cooks of the abbey; the street of the butchers was assessed each year at thirty gallons of grease; the street of fullers made up the woollen mattresses for the monks, and the street of the skinners the skins which they needed; the street of the vine-dressers gave weekly thirty-seven gallons

of wine and two of oil; the street of the innkeepers sixty gallons of beer daily; the street of the hundred and ten knights were bound to keep up each his horse, buckler, lance, sword, and other arms.

The chapel of the nobles gave each year twelve pounds of incense and perfume, the four chapels of the common people paid a hundred pounds of wax and three of incense. The offerings presented at the tomb of St. Riquier were worth weekly two hundred marks, or three hundred pounds of silver. Then follows the inventory of the vessels of gold and silver of the three churches of St. Riquier, and the catalogue of the books in the library. Then a list of the villages of St. Riquier, to the number of twenty. In these villages are certain vassals of St. Riquier, who hold the lands as military benefices (*i.e.* on condition of rendering military service). There are thirteen other villages besides without *melange de fief*, and these villages, says the document, are not so much villages as towns and cities.

The enumeration of the churches, towns, villages, and dependent lands of St. Riquier, presents the names of a hundred knights attached to the monastery, who formed around the abbot, on the festivals of Christmas, Easter, and Whitsuntide, an almost royal court."

The monasteries of women filled a place in the society of that day, less important perhaps to the learning and civilization of the future, but of special

value in an age of violence and change. We cannot doubt that, though there was not that general confiscation of the property of the Gallo-Roman proprietors which some have supposed, there were many illegal acts by which individual Romans were dispossessed by the unauthorized intrusion of a Frank adventurer seeking his fortune, or of a Frank noble seeking to increase his estates. It is easy to imagine the number of high-born, delicately nurtured women who would, under such circumstances, be suddenly thrust out from the splendour and refinement of a Roman villa life, and cast upon the world. To these ladies, with the religious notions of their time, a religious house offered a peaceful and dignified refuge.

Cæsarius of Arles founded a nunnery in that city, of which his sister was the first head, and drew up a "Rule of Life" for the nuns. Half a century afterwards Radegunda founded another in the city of Poitiers, whose history is so fully given by contemporary writers, and so curiously illustrates the manners of the times, that it is worth while to give it at some length in an episodical chapter.*

We add a brief note on the relations between the Church of Gaul and that of Saxon England. When Gregory the Great sent Augustine and his monks to effect the conversion of the country in which his interest had been excited by the sight of a group of captive children (English) exposed for sale in the Roman forum, he furnished them with letters of

* Chap. xi.

commendation to some of the leading bishops of Gaul, and to Queen Brunhilda, and the kings Theodebert and Theodoric.

But when they learned that a daughter of Childebert was married to Ethelbert of Kent, and that Bishop Liudhard was at the court of the Kentish king, instead of trying to make their way to the Northumbrian kingdom from which Gregory's little friends had come, they directed their steps to Kent; and it was the favourable opening thus already made by the Frank princess and Bishop Liudhard which caused Canterbury to become the head-quarters of Augustine's missionary work.

Then, when Augustine had met with success in Kent, he was consecrated bishop of the Anglo-Saxons, at the request of Gregory, by the Gallic bishops; so that, so far as our English succession is derived from Augustine, it is derived from the Church of Gaul.

The Gallic Church also had a direct share in the conversion of their neighbours and the planting of the Church among them. King Sigebert, who established the faith in the East Anglian kingdom, had been converted and "admitted to the sacraments of the faith" while an exile in Gaul, and as soon as he ascended the throne "he made it his business" to make all his province partake of the same blessings; and "being desirous to imitate the good institutions which he had seen in France, he set up a school for youths to be instructed in literature."* Felix, who

* Bede, "Ecclesiastical History," ii. 15

was consecrated as his bishop, was born and ordained priest in Burgundy, before he occupied for seventeen years the see of the East Angles.

In the West Saxon kingdom * also, Bishop Agilbert, who laboured for some time among them planting the faith, was a Gallo-Roman, and afterwards Bishop of Paris. Wini, who was bishop of another section of the West Saxons at the same time, had been ordained in Gaul. Agilbert, when afterwards invited to return to the West Saxons, declined, but sent his nephew Eleutherius, who was consecrated as their bishop by Theodore, and laboured among them. We hardly estimate rightly the difficulty of the journey which Augustine and his companions undertook from Italy to Gaul, and across the breadth of Gaul, and across the Channel. The circumstances threw the Church of England in Saxon, as formerly in Roman times, upon its more highly civilized Gallic neighbour for help. It amply repaid its obligations when, subsequently, it sent Boniface to reorganize the Church of the Franks, and Alcuin to revive learning in the empire of Charlemagne.

* Bede, "Ecclesiastical History," iii. 7.

CHAPTER VIII.

ECCLESIASTICAL ANTIQUITIES.

Church architecture—Sidonius's description of the new church at Lyons—A Church function—Gregory of Tours's description of the new basilica of St. Martin, and of that at Clermont—Paintings in churches—Actual remains of churches—Fragments of sculpture, etc.—Mode of election of bishops—The election of a bishop at Bourges—Sidonius's speech—Illustrations of mode of episcopal appointments under the Merovingian kings from Gregory of Tours—Rogations—Solitaries and recluses—Religious widows—Custom of sanctuary—Life in the sanctuaries of St. Martin of Tours, and St. Hilary of Poitiers—Belief in miracles—Reverence for relics—Pilgrimage—Impostures—Energumens.

SINCE the illustration of the religious history of the period is the especial aim of our work, we shall throw together here a few particulars which do not fall into the stream of the narrative, but which seem necessary to a correct conception of the condition of the Church and the religious spirit and manners of the times.

CHURCHES.—Of the fabrics of the churches of that time we have quite sufficient information to

enable us to realize what they were in plan, magnitude, and architectural character.

The basilican plan, for the larger churches at least, obtained throughout the whole period; costly material was employed upon them, marble columns, tesselated pavements, gilded ceilings, mosaics and paintings on the walls. The architectural style gradually changed from the already debased classical styles of the age of Constantine down to the rude Romanesque of the eighth century.

One of the pleasant letters of Sidonius * describes a basilica which Patiens, Bishop of Lyons, built in that city in honour of the popular Gallic Saint Justus. Sidonius and two other poets, the most eminent of their age and nation, were invited by the bishop to supply three inscriptions,† which were to be engraved on tablets and placed at the west end of the church. Sidonius gives us a copy of his composition, which is in verse; he pleasantly excuses himself from sending those of his friends, because he is unwilling to submit his own to the unfavourable comparison, as it is bad taste to give a bride a bridesmaid handsomer than herself. We gather from the verses that the new church faced "the equinoctial east." "It is light within; the sun is attracted to the gilded ceiling, and wanders with its yellow glow over the yellow metal. Marbles of various splendour enrich the ceiling (*camerum*), the

* Lib. ii. 10.

† Sidonius also wrote an inscription for the new basilica at Tours built by Bishop Perpetuus (Lib. iv. Ep. 18).

pavement, and the windows; and through the leek-green glass of the windows, beneath varicoloured figures, an encrustation, grassy and spring-like, bends around the sapphire gems.

> 'Ac sub versicoloribus figuris
> Vernans herbida crusta sapphiratos
> Flectit per prasinum vitrum lapillos.'

It has a triple portico (probably along three sides of the atrium), magnificent with Aquitanian marbles, and a similar portico closes the further side of the atrium. A grove of stone scatters its columns far and wide over the interior." It is easy to gather that the church was of the usual basilican type, handsomely adorned with marbles, mosaic, and gilding.*

In another letter, Sidonius gives incidentally a glimpse of a Church function in this very church: "We had assembled at the sepulchre of St. Justus, where they made the yearly procession before dawn. There was a great multitude of people, more than the capacious basilica and the crypt could hold, though surrounded with spacious porticoes. When the office of vigils was ended (chanted by monks and clergy in alternate choruses), we parted from one another, but did not go far, that we might be in readiness for Tierce, when the priests should celebrate the Divine office. The crowd in the church, the many lights, and the closeness of the night—for it was still summer, though tempered by the freshness of the coming autumn—oppressed us, and when the various ranks of citizens dispersed,

* See also Lib. vi. 12.

we, who belonged to the first families of Lyons, decided to make our rendezvous at the tomb of the Consul Syagrius, which was scarce a bowshot from the church. Here some reclined under the shade of a trellis, covered with the leaves and clusters of a vine; others, of whom I was one, sat on the green sward, which was fragrant with flowers. Whoever could tell a good story was sure of eager listeners. There was no sustained conversation, for it was continually interrupted by lively sallies. At length, tired of doing nothing, the old people played at tables, the young ones at ball (tennis)." Sidonius wrote an epigram. It was hardly read when word came that it was time for the bishop to leave his chamber, and all rose and returned to the church.

Gregory of Tours has frequent notices of the new churches built during the period embraced by his ecclesiastical history. He tells us the actual dimensions of the new basilica * of St. Martin, built by Perpetuus, the sixth successor of St. Martin in the see of Tours. It was 160 feet long by 60 wide; its height to the ceiling was 45 feet; it had 32 windows in the presbytery, and 20 in the nave, and 41 columns; in the whole edifice 52 windows, 120 columns, and 8 gates. Since the ceiling (*camera*) of the ancient church was an elegant work, the bishop erected another church in honour of SS. Peter and

* Mabillon says that it has been satisfactorily shown that in the writings of authors who wrote in Gaul in the sixth and seventh centuries, "basilica" is to be understood as meaning the church of a convent; cathedral and parish churches being called "ecclesiæ." ("Dict. of Christian Antiq.," art. "Basilica.")

Paul, and placed this ceiling upon it.* The first basilica of St. Martin had been built by Bishop Brice, the fourth bishop. This second church of Perpetuus was burnt down, and rebuilt by Gregory, larger and more beautiful, and dedicated in the seventeenth year of his episcopate.†

The church which Namatius, the eighth bishop of Clermont, built, "which is the principal church there," was 150 feet long by 60 wide, and 50 feet high to the ceiling of the nave; in front it had a round apse, on each side stretched aisles of elegant structure, and the whole edifice was disposed in the form of a cross. It had 42 windows, 70 columns, and 8 gates. Gregory gives an interesting note of the religious impression produced upon the mind by the building: "A pious fear of God makes itself felt in this place, which is penetrated by a bright clearness, and very often the religious perceive there perfumes which seem as if they were given out by sweet spices. The walls of the altar are adorned with different kinds of marbles, carved with much elegance."

The wife of the above Bishop Namatius built the basilica of St. Stephen without the walls of the town, and had it painted with paintings, which she indicated to the artists out of a book which she possessed—some religious book, doubtless, illuminated with miniature paintings. One day, when the bishop's wife was sitting in the church reading, a poor person, who came into the church to pray, took

* ii. 14. † x. 31.

her for a poor old woman, and put a piece of bread on her knees. She accepted it with thanks, and kept it, "using it at meals for the blessing." Bishops and priests used to send presents of blessed loaves (*Eulogiæ*), in token of respect or affection; the receiver used to eat a little of the loaf every day, as if it conveyed a quasi-sacramental blessing: *e.g.* we are told in the life of Eligius, that when he left the monastery of Luxeuil, after a visit, "he earnestly begged a little loaf of bread, of which he ate a little every day, fasting, as if it had been the holy communion." So the wife of Namatius accepted the loaf given her in charity as if it had been a *Eulogia*, and, according to custom, eat a little of it every day till none of it was left.*

Agricola, Bishop of Chalons, a man of senatorial race, wise and cultured, built in his city many edifices, also a church with columns, marbles, and mosaic pictures.†

Of Balmatius, Bishop of Rhodez, he tells us that he constructed a church, but as he often had it pulled down in order to make it more perfect, he died, leaving it unfinished.

There are still some actual remains of the churches of this period; at Perigueux, and the baptistry at Poitiers. Along the Loire are several churches, which date from the sixth to the eighth centuries. In the valley of the Rhone are many remains in a good Roman style, which are, no doubt, of this period, *e.g.* the porch of Avignon Cathedral. The church of

* ii. 16. † v. 46.

the Convent of Romain-motier in the Jura, which still remains, was dedicated by Pope Stephen II. A.D. 753.

The *Abécédaire* of M. de Caumont gives us engravings of a few fragments of the church work of this period: carved capitals, specimens of mouldings and surface decorations, fragments of pavements, mosaics, and sculptured sarcophagi; which help us to realize the details of the churches which Sidonius and Gregory describe, and serve to illustrate the gradual change in architecture from the tolerably pure classic character of the fifth and sixth centuries, through the knot-work and rude figure design of the seventh and eighth.

BISHOPS.—Sidonius gives us much information on the mode of electing bishops in his time. In the case of a vacancy in the see of Châlons, he tells us * there were three candidates; one a man of no merit but of good family, the second a man who was gaining partisans by help of his kitchen; † the third had secretly pledged himself to reward his partisans out of the possessions of the see. The bishops of the province assembled; and in the end Patiens and Epiphanius consecrated John the Archdeacon, who was recommended by his honesty, charity, and sweetness of disposition. How the bishops

* Bk. vi. 7.

† Gregory of Tours also (v. 47) tells us that on the death of Balmatius, Archbishop of Rhodez, many, as usual, sought his see. The priest Transobaldus had great expectation of it, and made a feast to the clergy of the city.

were able to get rid of the other candidates is probably indicated by what took place in the next instance.

In the seventh book we have several letters (5, 6, 8, 9) relating to the filling up of the vacant see of Bourges. In the first of these letters to the Lord Pope Agrœcius* (he was Bishop of Sens), he tells him that he has been summoned to Bourges because of the death of their bishop, and the confusion which exists over the choice of a successor among a multitude of unworthy candidates. He informs him that the wars have not left in the province a sufficient number of bishops to consecrate; and therefore he invites Agrœcius, though of another province, to come to their assistance; and he promises that he will leave the selection of the new bishop to him,

* The title "Pope," which is nothing more than "Father," was given to all bishops in those days. Sidonius constantly addresses his contemporary bishops as "Lord Pope," etc. A little later Radegunda, in her letter to the bishops, addresses them as her "holy lords, and most worthy possessors of the apostolic see, her fathers in Christ" (*dominis sanctis et apostolica sede dignissimis, in Christo patribus*), and signs herself "Radegunda, a sinner" (*Radegundis peccatrix*). St. Didier, Bishop of Cahors, writing to St. Ouen, addresses him, "Holy and excellent Apostolic Father and Pope" (*Sancto ac præferendo apostolico patre Dadoni papæ Desiderius servus servorum Dei*—Lib. i. Ep. 10), and signs himself "Didier, servant of the servants of God." So St. Eligius, writing to the same St. Didier, addresses him as his "ever Lord and apostolic father, Pope Desiderius," and signs himself "Eligius, servant of the servants of God" ("Letters of St. Desiderius," Lib. ii. Ep. 10).

The see of Rome has retained some of these ancient forms of expression, which have been gradually abandoned by the other bishops of the West.

and will support his choice. Letter 8 is to the Lord Pope Euphronius (Bishop of Autun), to ask his advice on the same business. He tells him that the people of Bourges demand for their bishop a layman of distinction (*vir spectabilis*) named Simplicius. In Letter 9, to the Lord Pope Perpetuus (Bishop of Tours), he tells him, with a good deal of humour, that there was so great a crowd of competitors that two benches could not hold the candidates for this one see. Every one was satisfied with himself, and every one was dissatisfied with all the rest (*Omnes placebant sibi, omnes omnibus displicebant*). The clergy and people got out of their embarrassment by putting the nomination absolutely into the hands of Sidonius. Perpetuus has asked him for a copy of the speech he made to the people of Bourges on the occasion, and he here sends it. It is very long and oratorical, according to the prevailing taste, but it is a very interesting illustration of the manners of the times. We can only extract fragments of two or three sentences which illustrate the subject on which we are engaged.

"If I should nominate to you," he says, "one from among the monks, though he were equal to Paul, Antony, Hilarius, or Macarius, I should hear the murmur of a crowd of ignoble dwarfs buzzing about my ears, saying, 'We want a man to fulfil the duties of a bishop, not of an abbot. This man is much more fit to intercede for souls before the Celestial Judge, than for bodies before the judges of this world.' . . . If I nominate a clerk, those who are of older

standing will be jealous of him, and those of younger standing will decry him; for there are some who think the number of years a man has been in the priesthood is the sole measure of his merit, as if to have lived long rather than to have lived well fitted a man for the Episcopate. . . . If I indicate a man who has had experience in military command, I shall hear these words: 'Because Sidonius was transferred from secular office to the episcopate, he is unwilling to have for his metropolitan a man taken out of the body of the clergy: proud of his own birth, elevated to the highest rank by his dignities, he despises the poor of Christ.'" . . . He concludes by nominating Simplicius, "until to-day one of your order (a layman), who from to-day will belong to our order, if, by you, God shall so determine." He gives a long eulogy of Simplicius and a statement of his claims: "Bishops and pretors have been among his ancestors; he himself is among the most notable of your fellow-citizens. Some one will say that Eucherus and Pannychius are more distinguished; but they have contracted second marriages." "Simplicius is a man of competent learning, great charity, etc." "More than once, on behalf of your city, he has stood before kings in furs and princes in purple."* He praises his wife, "descended from the family of the Palladii, who have occupied the chair both of letters and of the altars, with the approbation of their order." But "since," he says, "the character of a matron should be mentioned only with delicacy

* That is, barbarian kings and Roman emperors.

and brevity" (*Sane quia persona matronæ verecundam et succinctam sui exegit mentionem*), he contents himself with stating that the lady is worthy of the honours of the two families; of that in which she was born and brought up, and of that into which she has entered by an honourable marriage. Both have brought up their children wisely and well." He concludes, "Since you have sworn to recognize and accept the decision of my Infirmity on the subject of this election—in the Name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost, SIMPLICIUS is he whom I declare worthy to be made metropolitan of our province and bishop of your city."

Gregory of Tours gives us numerous notices of the mode of appointing bishops in his day. The regular mode of election was by the clergy and laity of the city; and the canons required that no one should come to the episcopate without having regularly passed through the degrees of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.* But the Frank kings assumed to themselves a right of nomination, and though an attempt was sometimes made to hurry through an election and consecration before the king could intervene,† the royal nomination seems never to have been openly resisted and refused.‡

* Lib. vi. 15. Cato, who was a candidate for the see of Tours when Euphronius was elected, says of himself that he had been lector ten years, sub-deacon five years, deacon fifteen years, priest twenty years.

† vi. 7.

‡ Lib. iii. 15; vi. 9, 39.

Frequently the king nominated a layman (we have seen that it had not been unusual in former times to elect laymen), and they were passed though the different degrees very hastily. Thus Maracarius, Count of Angoulême, was made clerk and consecrated bishop.* The King Clothaire caused Badegesilus, mayor of the royal palace, to be elected Bishop of Avignon, who, having been tonsured, passed by the different degrees of the clericature, and forty days after succeeded to the see.† These last examples are enough to indicate that the kings often promoted their civil servants and courtiers to the office of bishop. The kings not only rewarded service out of the benefices of the Church, but even sold their nominations. When a see was vacant, candidates for it posted off in haste to the king and sought his nomination by presents.‡

Gregory says of King Chilperic that few priests obtained the episcopate in his reign. On the other hand, Guntram, when a number of candidates for the see of Bourges offered him presents, said it was not his custom to sell the priesthood.§ He had also sworn not to choose laymen for bishops, but sometimes did so; "for alas," says Gregory, "what cannot the accursed thirst of gold effect in the hearts of mortals." ‖

Some bishops were married men.¶ Sometimes a coadjutor with right of succession was appointed to

* v. 37. † vi. 9. ‡ vi. 39; x. 26, etc. § vi. 39.
‖ Lib. viii. 22. ¶ iv. 36; viii. 39.

an infirm bishop. Three * bishops who had wrongfully consecrated a bishop to the see of Dax were required to maintain him.†

ROGATIONS.—Sidonius ‡ tells how, about the year A.D. 468, the city of Vienne was afflicted with a strange succession of calamities—fires, earthquakes, frightful noises; and Mamertius the bishop instituted processions of clergy and people, walking through the streets, singing psalms and appropriate prayers, for the three days preceding Ascension Day, in order to pray for deliverance from these calamities, and those still greater which these seemed to portend. Other cities adopted the custom; it gradually became general. The Council of Orleans in the last year of Clovis ordered its universal adoption. It spread to the English Church, so intimately related with that of Gaul. The beating of the bounds of our parishes on Ascension Day is the meagre remnant of what must have been, and might still be, a very grand and striking act of popular recognition of Almighty God.

RECLUSES AND SOLITARIES.—Not only the more sober life of the religious community, which Martin and Cassian and Benedict had introduced into Gaul, but the wild austerities and exceptional extravagancies of the Egyptian solitaries found

* v. 5. See also Sidonius (Lib. iv. Letter 11), for another example in his day.

† viii. 20.

‡ Lib. vii. Ep. 1.

imitators in a physical and moral climate which would seem little adapted to them.

Gregory tells us * of a man named Vulfilaic, in the neighbourhood of Treves, who had imitated Simeon and the other stylites of the East, and lived on his pillar for several years; and of a priest who always retained a standing position until his feet had become diseased.

The life of reclusion, a curious phase of the "religious" life, seems to have flourished in Gaul in these times. It is fully illustrated in the pages of Gregory's history:—

"In the city of Nice lived a recluse named Hospitius, a man of great abstinence, who wore on his naked body chains of iron, and over them a robe of hair-cloth, and eat nothing but bread and dates." "God deigned to work great miracles by him;" of which some examples are given—healing the sick, the deaf and dumb, the blind, and the possessed. He had also a gift of prophecy; *e.g.* he foretold the invasion of Gaul by the Lombards. He lived in a tower, the entrance to which was walled up, and by his window he held his only communication with the world. When the Lombards at length invaded the country they surrounded the recluse's tower, and finding no door, some of them climbed upon the roof and broke it up, and so obtained entrance; and finding him in chains, and clothed with hair-cloth, they supposed he must be some great criminal. In the true recluse spirit he con-

* Lib. viii. 15.

fessed that he was so; but they did him no injury, and left him in his cell. "On the approach of death he sent to the prior of the monastery and bade him 'bring tools to open the wall, and send messengers to the bishop of the city to come and bury me, for in three days I shall leave this world and go to the rest which God has promised me.'" * The tomb of this recluse was still to be seen in the cathedral of Nice in the seventeenth century. The tower which he inhabited was situated on a little peninsula about a league from Nice, and bore the name of San Sospir.†

One of the nuns of St. Radegunda, in the monastery at Poitiers, had a vision of the Celestial Bridegroom, and "a few days afterwards begged the abbess to cause a little cell to be made ready for her, to live there in reclusion. The cell was soon ready. The abbess said to her, 'Behold the cell; now what do you wish?' The religious demanded that it might be permitted to her to be enclosed there. This favour was granted her. She was conducted there by the assembled virgins, with chants, by the light of torches, Radegunda holding her by the hand. Then, having said adieu to all her companions, and embraced them one by one, she was enclosed, the opening of the cell was sealed, and there she gives herself up to this day to prayer and reading." ‡

A little later we read of another recluse in the same monastery. One of the nuns, "having slid from the height of the walls, had taken sanctuary

* vi. 6. † Note *in loc.* by Guizot. ‡ vi. 29.

in the neighbouring basilica of St. Hilary, and brought many accusations against the abbess, which were found to be false. But at last, having climbed back into the monastery with cords by the same place by which she had escaped, she demanded to be enclosed in a secret cell, saying, 'For having sinned greatly against God and against my Lady Radegunda' (who at that time was living) 'I wish to separate myself altogether from the society of this convent, and to do penance for the forgetfulness of my duties. I know that the Lord is full of mercy, and forgives those who confess their sins.' She entered into her cell. But afterwards the spirit of disorder raised by Chrodielda in this monastery extended to the poor recluse, and she broke the door of her cell during the night and went to join Chrodielda."

At Bordeaux a child of twelve years old, named Anatolius, refused to be dissuaded from becoming a recluse, and was walled up in a corner of an ancient vaulted building. After having lived this life for eight years, he seems to have been able to endure it no longer. He complained of internal pains, and at length he loosened the squared stones which kept him enclosed, overturned the wall, bruising his hands, and came out.*

Another recluse, giving way to love of wine, got into a habit of drinking, and went mad.* Gregory speaks of other recluses—Senoch at Tours, Caluppa in Auvergne, Patrocles at Bourges, Eparcus, who

* viii. 34.

lived the life of seclusion for forty-four years at Angoulême, and others.* We need do no more than name them; we have already said enough to illustrate the common existence of the recluse life in this period, the motives which influenced the recluses, and the various results of the unnatural experiment.

Religious Widowhood—that is, the observance by widows of a "religious" life, based upon the "rule" laid down by St. Paul (1 Tim. v.), was very usual. We have seen that Clotilda, the widow of Clovis, lived in religious retirement at Tours. Ingoberga, the widow of King Childebert, also is described as a woman of great wisdom, given to a religious life, diligent in watchings, prayers, and alms.† Gregory's account of another religious widow may be given at length, as it illustrates other customs of the time. "The mother of Count Eulalius had an oratory in her house, and used often, when the servants were asleep, to spend the night-watches in prayers and tears; on such occasions she wore a hair-cloth. One day she was found strangled, it was believed by her dissolute son. At the festival of St. Julian, at the time of divine service, Eulalius prostrated himself before the bishop, and complained that he was refused communion, innocent and unheard. The bishop bade him then take part in the service. When it came

* *E.g.* in the "Libri de Gloria Confessorum," xcviii., ci., ciii., etc.

† Gregory of Tours, ix. 26.

to the administration, the bishop addressed him. 'Popular report accuses you of matricide. I know not whether you are guilty; I remit the judgment to God and St. Julian. If you are innocent as you say, approach, take a portion of the Eucharist, and put it into your mouth.'" * The bishop did not *give* it him, but challenged him to *take* it.

Sanctuary.—Another custom, very frequently alluded to in Gregory's narrative, is the custom of sanctuary. Again and again we are told of men who have incurred the displeasure of the king,† or have committed some crime, or of slaves who fear the anger of their master,‡ taking temporary refuge in the nearest church, or taking up their abode in the precincts of some more famous shrine.§ And we find that the sanctuary was almost universally respected. Even a man who attempted to assassinate King Guntram, and who was at once dragged out of the church to which he had fled by the over-zealous servants of the king, was only beaten, and not slain, "because they thought it was not permitted to put to death a man whom they had dragged out of the church;"‖ and on another occasion Theodebert says,¶ "We are Christians, and it is not permitted to punish criminals whom they have dragged out of the church."

* We read afterwards of the dissolute count that he carried off a nun from the monastery of Lyons and married her.

† x. 10; v. 1; Brunehaut, vi. 15; Fredegonda, ix. 9.

‡ v. 3. § iv. 15. ‖ ix. 3. ¶ ix. 38.

The immunity of the sanctuary was sometimes evaded. Two slaves of Duke Rauchlin the Cruel had married without their lord's leave, and had fled for sanctuary to the neighbouring church. The priest interceded with the duke not to kill, or beat, or separate them, and he promised that he would not. When they returned, he had a grave dug, and had them placed in it together, and filled it in, and so fulfilled his promise.

The great basilicas of St. Martin at Tours and St. Hilary at Poitiers seem to have been the two most famous sanctuaries of Gaul.

On the assassination of King Sigebert, Chilperic seized the Touraine, and as a consequence of this revolutions Duke Guntram, surnamed Bose—the Bad—took sanctuary in St. Martin's. Chilperic sent Duke Rauchlin the Cruel, with troops, to demand the refugee, with the threat of burning the suburbs of the town if he were not surrendered. Bishop Gregory, who was a young man, and had only lately succeeded to the see, was greatly troubled, but he refused to allow the violation of the right of sanctuary. Rauchlin burnt one villa, by way of enforcing his threats, and was seized with sickness. A few days after, on the feast of the Epiphany, he entered the city on horseback, and finding the clergy going in procession from the cathedral to the basilica of St. Martin, preceded by banners and the cross, he put himself at the head of the procession, immediately after the cross. On entering the church his illness increased; and he died at the

end of the month. Chilperic took the strange step of writing a letter to St. Martin, asking leave to remove the criminal from his protection.' The letter was placed upon the saint's tomb, with a blank paper for the saint's reply. Since the saint did not give any reply to the missive, the king contented himself with taking an oath from Guntram Bose that he would not quit the sanctuary without his knowledge.

When, shortly after, Merovig, the son of Chilperic, was by his father's order tonsured, ordained priest, and sent into exile into a monastery in the country of Le Mans, the Duke Guntram Bose, who was still living in sanctuary at St. Martin's, sent a deacon, advising him to escape from his conductors and take sanctuary also. The historian follows the fortunes of the unhappy young prince, and thus introduces us into the inner life of the sanctuary at Tours. The weak young prince and the wicked duke lived there, with their attendants, within the sacred precincts, a life of riot and debauchery. Occasionally they sallied out into the town, attacked the house of some citizen, and retreated with their plunder into sanctuary. Once Guntram Bose induced the prince even to mount and sally forth from the town for a day's hunting, thinking to betray him to an ambush laid for his life by the Queen Fredegonda. King Chilperic tried to induce the bishop to expel the prince from the sanctuary, but in vain. He sent soldiers to ravage the territory of Tours in revenge; but he did not violate the

sanctuary.* At length Merovig left of his own accord, and fled to Austrasia.

Some years afterwards, Eberulf, the chamberlain of Chilperic, accused by Fredegonda of the king's death, took sanctuary in St. Martin's, and dwelt in the sacristy. He, like Merovig, sought to relieve the tedium of his confinement with feasting and loose living. One evening, when the priest who had charge of the doors had retired, after having closed them, some young women came in with some of the servants of Eberulf, strolling about, admiring the pictures on the walls, and the ornaments of the holy shrine. This was a scandal to the religious, and the priest was ordered to bolt the doors. But Eberulf, having heard of it, after supper, elevated with wine, entered the church at the beginning of night, when they chanted the Psalms (vespers, perhaps), and abused both the priest and Gregory the bishop for what had been done. The sequel of the story tells us how a servant of Fredegonda's, incited to it by the queen, pretended to take sanctuary, wormed himself into the confidence of Eberulf, took an opportunity when alone with him to stab him mortally, and then sought refuge in the cell of the abbot himself. But not only the servants of the murdered noble, but the pilgrims who happened to be there, forced open the abbot's cell, dragged the sacrilegious murderer out, and killed him.

When Count Leudaste had fallen under the dis-

* When Duke Astrapius took sanctuary in St. Martin's, King Chramnus forbade any one to give him food or water (iv. 15).

pleasure of Chilperic and Fredegonda, he took sanctuary at St. Hilary at Poitiers. He organized some of the lawless men he found there into a band, with whom he used to make sorties into the town, attack and plunder the house of some rich citizen, and retire again into sanctuary. He ate and drank and diced, and introduced women of bad repute into the very porticoes of the church, till at length the authorities of the church refused to tolerate his excesses, and drove him out of sanctuary.

The wife of Duke Rauchlin was told of his death at Soissons, as she was crossing the *Place* of the city on her way to church, covered with gold and jewels, preceded and followed by servants. She at once took sanctuary in the basilica of St. Medard.*

The bishops exercised a kindred power of mitigating the horrors of the time, by personal interference on behalf of a criminal, which was often effectual.† Thus, Guntram Bose on one occasion took sanctuary in the cathedral of Verdun, and the bishop made his peace with King Childebert.

No doubt it often led the bishop into a position of great difficulty, when some powerful criminal sought his influence to defeat justice. Guntram Bose, on another occasion, sought refuge in the

* Gregory, ix. 9.

† St. Augustine exercised this privilege so freely as to call forth a remonstrance from the Vicar of Africa. He sometimes refused to interfere where he thought that punishment was deserved, as in the case of the people of Calamus (Augustine, "Fathers for English Readers," pp. 170, 117).

house of the Bishop of Mayence, and threatened to kill him if he did not obtain his pardon from King Childebert. The bishop had the double claim of his sacred office and of being godfather to the king's son, but the king refused to let the criminal so escape his vengeance. He ordered the bishop's house to be set on fire, saying, "If the bishop likes to stay with him, let them both burn." His clerks dragged the bishop out of the burning house. When Guntram Bose was at last driven out by the flames, the king's men who waited for him pierced his body at once with so many lances that it was not able to fall to the earth.*

MIRACLES.—Gregory fully shared the belief of his age that the power of working miracles was possessed by many men of eminent holiness and faith—bishops, monks, recluses. He wrote a whole book on the miracles of St. Martin, of St. Julian, and of others. In the great majority of cases they are miracles of healing, but others are recorded. The power was even so common as not always to command for the miracle-worker the reverence we should suppose inseparable from such a gift; as we learn from a story of a young monk who was set to watch a heap of corn, while his brethren were engaged in other labours of the field. The clouds gathered and threatened rain, and the

* ix. 10. For examples of the custom of sanctuary in the English Church, and an essay on the subject, see the *Churchman's Family Magazine*, for Oct. 1, 1864.

young monk, unable to protect his charge from it, prostrated himself on the ground and prayed; and, in answer to his prayers, while the rain fell all around, not a drop fell upon the corn. The monks, running to save the corn, found it so. The abbot had the young monk beaten and confined to his cell for a week on bread and water, saying, "It behoves you, my son, to grow humbly in the fear and service of God, and not to glorify yourself by prodigies and miracles." *

Relics.—Another of the characteristics of the religion of the time, which occupies so large a space in the pages of its history that it ought not to pass without notice here, is the general rage for the possession of relics, and the consequent active traffic in them. People believed that by possessing the relic of a saint they brought themselves under his special protection, and that their special devotion to him secured his good offices. He wrought miracles of healing at his shrine; he furthered the prayers of his clients with his own intercession; he avenged injuries done to them. Every cathedral desired to increase its reputation by the possession of relics as many and as sacred as it could obtain. Every founder of a monastery thought it among the most important provisions for the well-being of his pious work that he should obtain the relics of some saint, under whose special patronage he might place his foundation.

* Bk. iv. § 34.

Thus Radegunda, "authorized by letters from King Sigebert, sent clerks to the East, to search there for morsels of wood of the Lord's cross, and relics of the holy apostles and martyrs," which were deposited in her church with great solemnity. When Eginhard, the secretary and historian of Charlemagne, founded a monastery, he sent Ratleig, his notary, to Rome to seek for relics.* The possession of the relics of some popular saint was, in temporal as in religious matters, a great advantage. It was the veneration for St. Martin which made kings pay special respect to his sanctuary, and remit taxes to his citizens;† which made pilgrims flock to his shrine to pray, and sick folk to seek healing, whose offerings constituted a large revenue.

In such a traffic there was evidently ample room for imposture. Gregory tells us of fellows who went about with pretended relics,‡ not only de-

* The story is given in minute and interesting detail by Eginhard himself, in his "History of the Translation of SS. Marcellinus and Peter," Lib. i. 2.

† Gregory, ix. 30.

‡ Like Chaucer's Pardoner—

"That streit was comen from the court of Rome

. . . . . .

For in his male he had a pilwebere
Which, as he saide, was oure ladies veil:
He saide he hadde a gobbet of the seyl
Thatte Peter had whan that he went
Upon the see, til Jesu Christ him hent.[1]
He had a crois of laton ful of stones,
And in a glasse he hadde pigges bones.

[1] took.

ceiving the common people and cheating them of their pence, but impudently thrusting themselves into the houses of the bishops and demanding respect and hospitality, and expecting presents.

An impostor came to Tours, clad in a *colobium*, and over that a *sindone*, like an Egyptian hermit. He carried a cross, to which a number of little ampullæ were suspended, containing, he said, holy oil. He pretended to have come from Spain, bringing relics of the martyrs Vincent the Levite and St. Felix. He went to the basilica of St. Martin, and sent in to the bishop, commanding him to come out and meet the sacred relics with due solemnity. When he saw that the bishop was not to be imposed upon, he threatened, with a lofty air and pompous voice, to complain of him to King Chilperic, and went on to Paris. When he entered this city, Bishop Raynemond was walking with his people in procession round the holy places, celebrating the rogations, which they are accustomed to celebrate before the day of the Ascension of the Lord. At the sight of his strange vestments and his cross, some women of the town and rustics joined him. He made a procession of them, and was going to make the circuit of the holy places with this crowd following him. The bishop, seeing this, sent his

> But with these relikes whanne that he foud
> A poure parsone dwelling upon lond,
> Upon a day he gat him more monie
> Than that the parsone gat in monthes twcie.
> And thus with fained flattering and japes,
> He made the parsone and the people his apes."

archdeacon to him, saying "If you bear relics of the saints, place them for a little while in the basilica, and celebrate the holy days with us; and when these solemnities are over, then you shall proceed on your way." But he, taking no notice of what the archdeacon said, overwhelmed the bishop with insults and curses. The bishop, perceiving that he was an impostor, ordered him to be shut up in a cell. They then examined what he carried, and found a great bag full of roots of divers herbs, some moles' teeth, bones of mice, claws and fat of bears. They threw it all into the river, took his cross from him, and ordered him to quit the territory of Paris. But, having made another cross, he began his impostures anew. He was taken by the archdeacon, and put in chains. The Bishop of Tarbes recognized him as a runaway servant of his. "There are many," says Gregory, "who by such impostures lead the country people astray." *

Another instance of religious imposture is given by Gregory in his "Book of Miracles" (§ cvi.). A certain woman, under a pretence of religion, spent her time in fasting, watching, prayer, and constantly making the round of the holy places in feigned devotion. She collected money for the redemption of captives, and in course of time had amassed immense sums, which she hid in secret places. We need not go on to describe how it was found that, after her death, the ill-gotten gold was poured molten down her throat, etc.

* ix. 40.

PILGRIMAGES.—The custom of pilgrimage is correlative with the belief in relics. Sick people travelled to the shrine of some famous saint to ask a miracle of healing; devout people travelled from shrine to shrine to seek a special interest in the prayers of the saints. The custom prevailed largely throughout Christendom at this period. Rome was the great object of pilgrimage throughout the West, the Holy Land being practically out of reach.*

ENERGUMENS.—Another belief of the times was that there were many persons possessed, and the utterances of these energumens were listened to as utterances of superhuman knowledge.† There is a very curious example near the end of Eginhard's "History of the Translation of the Blessed Martyrs SS. Marcellinus and Peter," Lib. vii. c. 91.

* For examples in the English Church of hermits and recluses, religious widows, relics, and pilgrimages, with essays on these subjects, see "Scenes and Characters of the Middle Ages," by the same author. Virtue & Co., London, 1872.

† *E.g.* Gregory of Tours, "De Mirac. St. Martini," § xxv.; "Historia Francorum," v. 14, etc.

CHAPTER IX.

THE CONVENT OF ST. RADEGUNDA AT POITIERS.

Radegunda taken captive—Educated and married by Clothaire—Flees from court—Is consecrated a deaconess—Takes sanctuary at St. Hilary of Poitiers—Founds a monastery of women there—Description of the building—Of the rules—Venantius Fortunatus comes to Poitiers—His relations with the convent of Radegunda—The revolt of Chrodielda and forty nuns—They flee to Tours—Return to Poitiers and take sanctuary at St. Hilary's.

CLOTHAIRE I. accompanied his brother Theodoric in an expedition against the Thuringians, and among the booty and captives which fell to his share, was a daughter of the late king, a pretty child of seven years of age, named Radegunda. The child's beauty pleased the king, and he had her carefully brought up, with the intention of one day marrying her. The Thuringian girl was committed to the care of a Gallo-Roman family, who brought her up, not like the German women, but in the learning and refinement and ideas of the ladies of the Roman nobility. From an early period she showed an inclination towards the religious life.

When at length Clothaire sent for her, she fled, but was caught and brought to court, and, in spite of her reluctance, was married to the king. He had other wives living, indeed; but the Church was obliged to tolerate the Frankish custom, which allowed—or was it the license of the Frankish kings which assumed?—a privilege as large as that of Solomon. The position of Radegunda was, in the eyes of all men, that of a lawful and, by caprice of the king, that of a favourite wife.

But the young bride gave herself to religious austerities and works of mercy, so that the king would say, "It is a nun, and not a queen, that I have got." She disliked the rude court, and loved the society of the learned and religious men who visited it.

What brought matters to a crisis was that the king, on some suspicion, slew her brother, who had been brought up in the king's household. Radegunda fled to Noyon, to the Bishop Meodardus, who had a wide reputation for sanctity, and entreated him to consecrate her to God. The bishop hesitated; the Frankish attendants who had accompanied the queen in her hasty journey threatened the bishop with the king's anger; they sought to drag her away, and the queen, alarmed at the tumult, sought refuge with her women in the vestry of the church.

When all was quiet, Radegunda threw a nun's habit over her royal attire, and proceeded from the vestry into the church, where the bishop sat in the sanctuary, and kneeling before him, addressed him:

"If thou delayest to consecrate me, and fearest men more than God, thou wilt have to render an account, and the Shepherd will demand of thee the soul of His lamb." Moved by this solemn appeal, the bishop at once consecrated her as a deaconess of the Church. Then she fled again to take sanctuary at Tours, and not feeling safe even there, fled again into the interior of the territory of Aquitaine, and took sanctuary at St. Hilary of Poitiers.

The king at first stormed, and insisted upon his wife's return. At last he was pacified, and resigned himself to her loss. Then he generously gave up to her the estates which he had conferred on her as her Morgen-gift, and allowed her to carry into execution her desire to found a convent at Poitiers, and endow it with her possessions.

The house was three years in building. In its general plan and arrangements it was, in fact, a Roman villa, such as we have already had occasion to describe, with all the usual appurtenances of porticoes, baths, and gardens, and with the special addition of a handsome church. As a precaution against the violence of the times, the walls were high and strong, like ramparts, and the entrance was defended by towers.

During the time that the material fabric was growing, the royal devotee was gathering and training her nuns. These were chiefly of Gallo-Roman race and of noble families. When at length all was ready, about the year A.D. 550, the citizens of Poitiers were greatly edified with the sight of the

ex-queen and a long train of noble maidens, preceded by ecclesiastics, and attended by friends, proceeding in solemn procession through the streets, to take possession of the sacred retreat which they had vowed never to quit.

The foundation deed is given us by Gregory: *—

"To my holy lords and most worthy possessors of the Apostolic See, my fathers in Christ, to all bishops, Radegunda a sinner.†

". . . I have constituted and founded, by the institution and bounty of the very excellent Lord King Clothaire, a monastery of damsels (*puellarum*) at Poitiers; I have endowed it with all which the royal munificence has given to me. I have imposed upon this congregation, which I have gathered with the help of Christ, the rule under which the holy Cæsarea lived—a rule which the blessed Cesarius, Bishop of Arles, suitably (*convenienter*) gathered from the institutions of the holy fathers. And by the consent of the blessed bishops, both of this city and of others, and by the choice of our congregation, I have instituted as its abbess my lady and sister (*dominam et sororem meam*) Agnes, whom from an early age I have cherished and brought up as a daughter, and I have submitted myself to regular obedience to her after God. And in conformity with apostolic usage, both I and my sisters have by charter surrendered into her hands all our

* x. 42.

† "Dominis sanctis et apostolica sede dignissimis, in Christo patribus, etc. Radegundis peccatrix."

earthly possessions, reserving nothing to ourselves on entering into the monastery, in fear of the fate of Ananias and Sapphira."

The foundress goes on to beseech the bishops, by the most solemn adjurations, to protect her house against any one, whether the bishop of the place, or the representative of the royal authority, who shall attempt to alter its regulations, or to take away any property once given it by any of the sisters on entering or other; and to secure to the community freedom of election of their abbess.

The study of literature occupied the first rank among the occupations imposed on all the community. Two hours of each day were to be devoted to it; the rest of the time was occupied in religious exercises, the reading of holy books, and needlework. During the working, which was done altogether, one of the sisters read aloud. The most intelligent of the nuns, instead of being employed in spinning, sewing, or embroidery, were busy in another room at the work of transcribing books. Although severe in certain points, such as abstinence from meat and wine, the rules tolerated some of the comforts to which the ladies had been accustomed, and even some of the pleasures of a secular life were permitted to the young recluses: *e.g.* the frequent use of the bath, amusements of various kinds, among them the then universal game of Tables.

We have seen that Radegunda had placed Agnes as abbess over the community; she herself held an

anomalous position as founder. The ex-queen and her abbess received as visitors not only bishops and clergymen, but also laymen of distinction. A generous hospitality was offered to their guests, at which the ex-queen presided out of courtesy, though abstaining from taking any share in the meal. The young recluses had also some variety in the monotony of their lives, and a wholesome breath of society from the outside, when dramatic scenes—probably of the nature of the mysteries and miracle plays so common throughout the Middle Ages —were occasionally represented, in which young girls from without, and probably also the novices of the house, appeared in brilliant costumes. Such was the order established by Radegunda in her convent of Poitiers; a compound of her personal inclinations and of the traditions preserved for half a century in the celebrated convent of Arles.

The great Bishop of Tours was brought into special relations with the ex-queen and her convent at Poitiers, and to him we are indebted for some famous subsequent passages in its history. But for the most curious and interesting pictures of the daily life of the royal devotee, and the interior economy of the convent, we are indebted to another writer, already twice mentioned, who is one of the characteristic personages of the times, and deserves a special description—the genial, pleasant, cultured gentleman and man of letters, Venantius Fortunatus.

"Born in the environs of Treviso, and educated

at Ravenna, Fortunatus came to Gaul to visit the tomb of St. Martin, in fulfilment of a pious vow; but the journey being in all ways delightful to him, he made no haste to terminate it. After having accomplished his pilgrimage to Tours, he continued to travel from town to town, and the society of the cultured Italian gentleman was sought and welcomed by all the rich and noble men who still piqued themselves on their refinement and elegance. He travelled all over Gaul, from Mayence to Bordeaux, and from Toulouse to Cologne, visiting on his road the bishops, counts, and dukes, either of Gallic or Frankish origin, and finding in most of them obliging hosts and often truly kind friends.

"Those whom he left, after a stay of a longer or shorter period in their episcopal palaces, their country houses, or strong fortresses, kept up a regular correspondence with him from that period, and he replied to their letters by pieces of elegiac poetry, in which he retraced the remembrances and incidents of his journey. . . . He freely flavoured his poetic epistles with compliments and flattery. The poet and wit praised the kindness, the hospitality, of the Frankish nobles, not omitting the facility with which they conversed in Latin; and the political talents, the ingenuity, and the knowledge of law and business which characterized the Gallo-Roman nobles. To praise of the piety of the bishops, and their zeal in building and consecrating new churches, he added approbation of their administrative works for the prosperity,

ornament, or safety of their cities. He praised one for having restored ancient edifices—a pretorium, a portico, and baths; a second for having turned the course of the river, and dug canals for irrigation; a third for having erected a citadel, fortified with towers and machines of war. All this, it must be owned, was marked with signs of extreme literary degeneracy, being written in a style at once pedantic and careless, full of incorrect and distorted expressions and of puerile puns; but, setting these aside, it is pleasant to witness the appearance of Venantius Fortunatus, rekindling a last flash of intellectual life in Gaul, and to see this stranger becoming a bond of union between those who, in the midst of a society declining into barbarism, here and there retained the love of literature and mental enjoyments." *

The monastery of Poitiers had attracted the attention of the Christian world for fifteen years, when, in A.D. 567, Venantius, in the course of his travels, paid a visit to Poitiers, bringing letters of introduction from King Sigebert to Radegunda. The recluses seem to have been delighted with his society; he was equally charmed with their flattering attentions. He protracted his visit. A friendship sprang up between the genial scholar on one side, and the ex-queen and the young abbess on the other, which may be compared with the religious friendship of Rufinus and Melania, or of Jerome and Paula and Eustochium. Venantius settled at

* Aug. Thierry's "Narratives of the Merovingian Era," chap. v.

Poitiers, and became the friend and counsellor of the ladies of the convent.

A number of his poems are addressed to the ex-queen and the abbess, whom he calls his mother and sister, and their playful gaiety has given a little occasion for scandal both in ancient and in modern times.* He continued his relations with the convent until the death of Radegunda. It was perhaps after that event that he was ordained as one of the priests of the cathedral church. Towards the end of his life, he was elected Bishop of Poitiers.†

On the death of Radegunda, Meroveus, Bishop of Poitiers, being absent, Gregory of Tours was sent for to perform the funeral ceremonies. He found the body exposed on a bier, after the fashion of the times. Her countenance, he says, surpassed in beauty the roses and lilies strewn over her. He could not have believed her dead, but for the lamentations of the nuns, to the number of two hundred, most of them of the greatest families, and some even of royal extraction.‡

* M. Guizot and M. A. Thierry in modern times have represented that these poems show that Fortunatus was a luxurious *bon-vivant*, and that the ladies of the convent humoured his tastes by giving him dainty banquets. The poems do not bear out this view. See "Erreurs et Mensonges Historiques," by M. Ch. Barthélemy, p. 186.

† The hymn Vexilla Regis, "The royal banners forward go," is attributed to him.

‡ Lives of Radegunda, written by Gregory himself, by Fortunatus, and by one of her nuns, have come down to us. For modern lives, see "Histoire de S. Radegonde," by Ed. de Fleury,

The abbess Agnes did not long survive her patroness. She was succeeded by Leubovere, and it seems to have been the disappointment felt by the "nuns of royal extraction," mentioned by Gregory, that the election did not fall upon one of them, which led to one of the most famous scandals of the age. We will let Gregory of Tours tell the story, for the most part, in his own words.

"In St. Radegunda's monastery at Poitiers the devil insinuated himself into the heart of Chrodieldis, who called herself a daughter of the deceased King Charibert; * she raised a great scandal, and trusting in the fact that she had kings for her relations made the Religious promise, on oath, that when she should have accused the Abbess Leubovere and have driven her from the monastery, they would choose her in her place. She then left the monastery with forty, or even more, of these girls, and her cousin Basine,† the daughter of Chilperic, saying, 'I go to seek the kings, my relations, to make them acquainted with our wrongs; for they keep us here in humiliation, not like daughters of kings, but like base servants.' She had forgotten, this miserable sinner, with what humility the blessed Radegunda, the foundress of the monastery, behaved. Having

A.D. 1847; "Les Saints de la France," by Ch. Barthélemy; Aug. Thierry's "Narratives of the Merovingian Era."

* And therefore a sister of our Queen Bertha, wife of Ethelbert of Kent.

† Gregory (v. 39), says she was the daughter of Clovis, the son of Chilperic, who was murdered by the command of his stepmother Fredegonda.

then arrived at Tours, she came to us, and having saluted us, said, 'I supplicate you, holy bishop, deign to protect and nourish these maidens whom the Abbess of Poitiers keeps in great humiliation, while I go to the kings, our relations, to reveal to them what we suffer, and return here again.' I said to her, 'If the abbess is in fault, and has in any way violated the canonical oath, we will go and find our brother, the Bishop Meroveus, and will reprimand her together; but do you amend your conduct by returning to your monastery, lest luxury disperse those whom the holy Radegunda gathered together by fastings, by multiplied prayers, and by abundant alms.' She replied, 'Not at all; we shall go and seek the kings.' And I rejoined, 'Why do you resist what is right, and for what reason do you refuse to listen to sacerdotal admonitions? I fear lest the assembled bishops should interdict you the communion.' This is indeed what we find expressed in a letter which our predecessors wrote to the blessed Radegunda at the time of the establishment of her convent."

Gregory here puts on record the document by which the bishops, seven of them, had given Radegunda authority to establish her monastery. We need not quote the whole of it. It is enough for the present purpose to say that it forbids any who had entered the convent to leave it again, and pronounces against any such fugitive a threat of interdict and anathema. The bishop resumes :—

"After having read this letter, Chrodieldis said, 'Nothing will keep us back; we shall go without any delay to seek the kings whom we know to be our relations.' Since they had come on foot from Poitiers without a single horse, they were tired and exhausted; no one on their way had given them anything to eat, and they had arrived at our city on the first day of the month. There had been much rain, and the roads were interrupted by a great quantity of water." Gregory advised them at least to wait till better weather for their journey, and accordingly they remained at Tours till summer came. Then Chrodieldis, confiding the rest to the cares of her cousin Basine, set off to find King Guntram. He received her, honoured her with presents, and she returned to Tours, leaving in the monastery of Autun Constantina, the daughter of Burgolin, to await there the bishops to whom the king had given order to come and inquire into her differences with the abbess. Meantime, before she returned from the king, many of her Religious, assailed on different sides, had entered into bonds of marriage. Chrodieldis and her cousin awaited the arrival of the bishops, but not seeing them come, she returned to Poitiers, and sought an asylum in the basilica of St. Hilary, where she gathered round her robbers, murderers, adulterers, and criminals of all kinds, ready for other crimes also, whom she enlisted in her interest, saying, "We are queens, and we will not re-enter our monastery till the abbess has been driven out of it."

Under her direction these ruffians issued from the sanctuary, broke into the monastery of Radegunda, dragged the abbess from before the altar of the holy cross, and kept her in confinement. This was just before Easter, and the bishop declared that he would not celebrate the Easter Eve Baptisms or the Easter Eucharist, and that he would raise the citizens against them, unless they liberated the abbess. An officer of the king, arriving at this crisis, took the matter in hand; attacked the sanctuary and rescued the abbess by force, and punished the ruffians by cutting off of hands and ears and noses.

After long delay, a synod of bishops met at Poitiers, under the presidency of Meroveus, and having made due inquiry, admonished the nuns to return to their monastery, and on their refusal pronounced sentence of excommunication upon them, according to the tenor of their foundation deed. Then the crowd of people in sanctuary made a riot, and, rushing into the church, made an assault upon the clergy. Bishops were flung down on the pavement, the deacons and other clerks rushed out of the basilica all bruised and bleeding.

Then the irrepressible Chrodieldis engaged men and invaded the villas of the monastery, and whomsoever she was able to seize from the monastery she reduced to her obedience by stripes and slaughter, threatening, if she could effect an entrance into the monastery, to throw the abbess from the top of its walls.

When King Childebert heard of these disorders, he directed Maccon, Count of Poitiers, to repress them. In the end, the rebellious nuns refusing to submit, and the bishops refusing to withdraw their excommunication, the nuns were dispersed, some to their relations, some to their own houses. Several returned to the monasteries to which they had formerly belonged, because, having no wood, they were unable, from the cold of the winter, to live together longer. Only a small number remained with Chrodieldis and Basine, and there were great discords between these two, each wishing to take precedence of the other (*altera alteri se præponere cupiebat*). At length Basine submitted and returned to the convent, but Chrodieldis, who continued obstinate, retired to an estate accorded her by Childebert.

CHAPTER X.

THE CELTIC MISSIONARIES.

Columbanus—His birth—Mission to Gaul—Founds a monastery at Annegray—Another at Luxeuil– Controversy with the Gallic Church– Quarrels with King Theodoric and is banished —Founds a monastery at Bregenz—Another at Bobbio—Gallus —Other Celtic missionaries among the Franks—Emmeran.

WHILE the monastic institution helped to preserve religion amidst the gradual corruption of the Church in Neustria, it was the chief source of the spiritual life which was spreading among the Franks of Austrasia, and among the dependent nations on their eastern frontier.

Ireland was at this time the seat of a learning and religious zeal which overflowed in a crowd of adventurous missionaries who went forth to spread the Gospel among the barbarous nations of Europe. Columbanus was born of noble parents, in Ireland, in 543, the same year that St. Benedict died at Monte Cassino; he was trained as a monk in the famous monastery of (the Irish) Bangor, under St. Comgall. In the year A.D. 585, at the age of about thirty, he crossed with twelve companions

into Gaul, and for several years travelled about preaching; he was welcomed by King Guntram into Burgundy, and there sought a site for a monastery. On the confines of Burgundy and Austrasia, amid the defiles and forests of the Vosges, he built a small house on the ruins of the Roman fortress of Annagrates (Annegray). Shortly after, leaving some of his monks at Annegray, he moved to the more extensive ruins of the ancient Lexovium, where, clearing the tangled thickets which had grown over the once celebrated Roman watering place, he erected the rude buildings of a monastery, cleared the neighbouring lands, and sowed and reaped amidst the brethren. His rule of life, sterner than that of Benedict, required absolute obedience, incessant labour, the sparest diet, severe restraint in every gesture, word, and thought: breaches of rule were punished by severe penances and even by beating. He entertained no superstitious belief that these austerities were in themselves meritorious. He himself gives us the *rationale* of his system. "Whosoever overcomes himself," he was wont to say, "treads the world underfoot; no one who spares himself can truly hate the world. If Christ be in us we cannot live to ourselves; if we have conquered ourselves we have conquered all things; if the Creator of all things died for us while yet in our sins, ought not we to die to sin? Let us die to ourselves; let us live in Christ, that Christ may live in us."

For twenty years he thus lived, and taught and

trained men, amidst the wild solitudes of the mountains, and the fame of his monastery spread far and wide. His ascetic life was a tacit rebuke to the worldliness of the Frankish clergy, and his adherence to the customs of the Celtic Church, especially in the time of keeping Easter, provoked animadversion. Gregory I. wrote to him on the subject as early as A.D. 599, but in reply, while expressing all due respect for the exalted position of the Bishop of Rome, he maintained his own independence, and adhered to his own customs. In 602 a synod of several of the Frankish bishops addressed a letter to him on the same subject. In his reply he expresses his thankfulness that he has been the occasion of their meeting, and wishes that they met oftener, as the canons require. On the Easter question he refers them to his letter to Gregory, and begs them to leave him in peace: "In the name of our common Lord and Master Jesus Christ, I beseech you, let me live in peace and quiet, as I have lived for twelve years in these woods, beside the bones of my seventeen departed brethren. Let Gaul receive into her bosom all who, if they deserve it, will meet in heaven. For we have one kingdom promised us, and one hope of our calling in Christ, with whom we shall reign together, if first we suffer with Him here on earth. Choose ye which rule respecting Easter ye prefer to follow, remembering the words of the Apostle, *Prove all things, hold fast that which is good.* But let us not quarrel one with another, lest our enemies the Jews, the heretics, and pagan

Gentiles, rejoice in our contention. . . . Pray for us, my fathers, even as we, humble as we are, pray for you. Regard us not as strangers, for we are members together of one body, whether we be Gauls, or Britons, or Iberians, or to whatever nation we belong. . . . Let us learn to love one another, and praise one another, and correct one another, and pray for one another, that with Him we may together reign for evermore." A curious spectacle, this colony of foreigners, Celts amidst Teutons, men of mortified aspect and unnaturally restrained lives, amidst the rough jovial giants of the forest, differing in their religious customs even from the clergy and monks of the Frankish Church.

During these twelve years those dynastic changes had taken place which we have already had to describe. King Guntram at his death had left his dominions to his nephew Childebert of Austrasia. Childebert, dead, had been succeeded by his two sons, Theodebert in Austrasia and Theodoric in Burgundy. The aged Brunhilda, the grandmother of the two princes, had been exiled from the court of Metz, and had taken refuge with her younger grandson in Burgundy. The chroniclers accuse her of conniving at the licentious life which the young king led in order to maintain her own influence over him. We know that all his family, with few exceptions, needed no encouragement to licentiousness, and would not be restrained. It is more likely that the able queen simply refrained from attempting to control him, and tried to maintain the

interests of the royal house as she had been doing for many years past.

The fame of the abbot of Luxeuil attracted Theodoric, and he often visited the abbey;—it is common enough for men to admire the ascetic virtue which they do not care to imitate; and the abbot did not neglect the duty of rebuking the king's vices; but this does not seem to have led to any quarrel between them. But on one occasion, when Columbanus had gone to the palace, Brunhilda brought to him the king's two (illegitimate) children and asked his blessing upon them. He replied, "These bastards, born in sin, shall never wield the royal sceptre." Seeing that it was the custom of the Merovingian family for illegitimate sons of the king to inherit together with their legitimate brothers, and calling to mind the sinister effect which such a prophecy from a popular saint would have on the minds of the people, the abbot's reply had a very important political significance;* at least, it was not very charitable, and it was the occasion of a quarrel between the queen-mother and the abbot. She is said to have avenged herself by petty annoyances, that she cut off supplies from his monasteries, and stirred up jealousy between them and neigh-

* It may be an early indication of the endeavours which the Church was making to restrain the licensed polygamy and concubinage of the Merovingian kings, by insisting upon the illegitimacy of all but the issue of a lawful marriage; and the indifference of the aged Queen Brunhilda to a license to which she had all her life been accustomed, may explain the accusation of the Church historians that she encouraged the vices of her grandson.

bouring convents. The abbot repaired again to court to remonstrate, but seems not to have met a friendly reception; on his part he refused to eat the meal which the king sent him, which, according to the customs of the times, was an overt refusal of friendship; and on his return to his convent he wrote, threatening the king with excommunication. The courtiers, the nobles, and bishops (stirred up, the chronicler says, by the queen-mother) inflamed the king's anger against the audacious stranger. Theodoric repaired to Luxeuil and demanded entrance; the abbot replied with menaces. "Thou thinkest," said the young king, "I shall confer on thee a martyr's crown. I am not so foolish as to gratify thy pride, but thou shalt go hence by the way by which thou camest." Columbanus refused to leave his cell. He was taken out of it by force and carried away to Besançon. But he eluded his guards, and made his way back to Luxeuil. Again he was taken, and with two or three of his monks hurried off to Auxerre, thence to Nevers, to Orleans, to Tours, so to Nantes, where he was put on board a ship bound for Ireland. But a storm drove the ship into some harbour on the Neustrian coast, and Columbanus landed. Clothaire II. besought him to remain with him; but after spending a few days at his court, and giving the king some advice on political matters, he repaired to the court of Theodobert of Austrasia, who also received him with all honour, and invited him to stay in his dominions.

Many of the brethren from Luxeuil rejoined their abbot here. He made arrangements for the well-being of the monastery at Luxeuil, but for himself he resolved to set out with the monks who had come to him in search of a new home. Embarking on the Rhine, and turning up the tributary Limmat, they reached Tugium (Zug), on the shores of the Lake of Zurich, and began to preach to the pagan Suevians. But they seem to have exhibited less prudence than zeal. Gallus, one of his monks, set fire to their temples, and flung their idols into the lake. Columbanus, at a great sacrifice to Woden, spilt (by miracle, his chroniclers say) the great vessel of beer which formed one of the offerings (and which, perhaps, should have ministered to a post-sacrificial feast). The Suevi rose against them, and they were obliged to fly, shaking off the dust from their feet, and devoting them and their children to misery and perdition. Next they travelled to the Lake of Constance, where a local priest pointed out Bregenz on the south-east side of the lake, where were ruins of a Roman town and a church still standing.

Here again (at Fontaines) they built themselves houses, took possession of the ancient church, destroying three idols which were in it, cleared and sowed land, laid out gardens, and planted fruit trees. One of the legends of this time has a wild poetry in it. One night, when Gallus was engaged on the quiet waters of the lake catching fish for the next day's meal of the community, he overheard the spirit of

the mountain call to the spirit of the waters: "Arm and come to my assistance. Strangers have come and driven me from my temple. Haste and help me to expel them from the land." To whom the spirit of the waters replied, "Lo! one of them is even now busied on my surface, but I cannot injure him, for he is defended by the invocation of an all-prevailing Name." Gallus shuddered at this unearthly dialogue, and crossing himself, addressed the spirits: "I adjure you, in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ, that ye depart from this place, and never dare to injure any one more." Then he hastened home and told the abbot, who rejoiced at this manifest proof that even the devils were subject unto them.

But he was compelled yet again to remove and seek a new home. The local chieftain was hostile. Moreover, Theodebert had been defeated, and Theodoric was marching through the country to complete his overthrow. Columbanus crossed the Alps with his disciples, and repaired to the court of Agilulf and Theodolinda, who received him gladly. Here he settled, and founded the monastery of Bobbio, in one of the Vaudois valleys, which long continued to be a centre of religion and learning to the north of Italy. Clothaire II., on becoming sole king of the Franks, sent to invite his return to Luxeuil; but he spent the few remaining years of his adventurous life in literary labours at Bobbio, and died there in 615, at the age of seventy-two.

When Columbanus crossed the Alps, Gallus had been left behind sick, with two other of the brethren. He founded, on the bank of a stream running into the Lake of Constance, the famous monastery which still exists and bears his name. He declined the offer of the see of Constance, which his virtues induced the duke, the bishops and clergy, and the people to offer him. For twelve years he continued his life of usefulness, reviving the faith in the see of Constance; reclaiming from barbarism the district bordering on the Black Forest; and teaching the people the arts of agriculture as well as the duties of religion. After his death, in A.D. 627, his cell became the resort of thousands of pilgrims, and was replaced by a more magnificent edifice under the auspices of Pepin l'Heristal; and, during the ninth and tenth centuries, it was one of the most celebrated schools of learning in Europe.

Columbanus was followed by a number of other missionaries, who left the monasteries of Ireland to preach the Gospel in the Germanic forests. Their number, and the permanent success of their labours, is marked by the veneration paid in many of the German towns and villages to this day to local saints of Irish name. Our space will only allow us to mention a few, in order to indicate the gradual spread of religion and civilization in Austrasia and its eastern dependents.

Fridolin, like Gallus, preached in the neighbourhood of Switzerland, Suabia, and Alsace, and

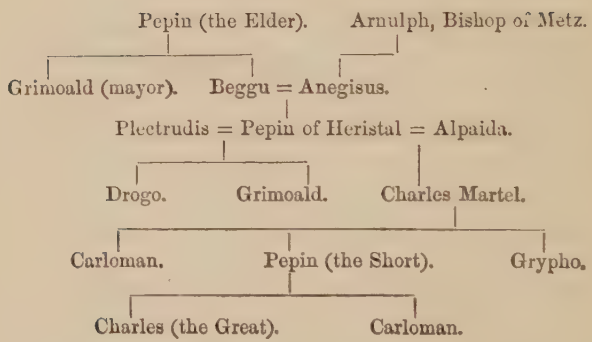
founded a monastery at Leckingen, on the Rhine. Magnoald also, or Magnus, the pupil of Gallus, founded a monastery at Füssen in Suabia; and Trudport, an Irish anchorite, penetrated as far as Breisgau in the Black Forest, where he was murdered. Somewhat later (A.D. 643), Kilian, a bishop of Iona, sailed from Ireland with two companions, and selected Würzburg in Franconia as the scene of his labours, and was assassinated there.

The example of Columbanus and his successors was not wholly without effect upon the Gallo-Frankish Church. A synod, held in A.D. 613, acknowledged the claims of the heathen on their sympathy; appointed Eustatius, the successor of Columbanus in the monastery of Luxeuil, director of their mission, and sent him with a monk named Agil to Bavaria. About the middle of the century (630), their labours in this field were followed up by Emmeran, a native of Poitiers, and a bishop in Aquitania. Moved by the reports of the heathenism in Pannonia, he resigned his see and set out thither. Arrived at Ratisbon, he was forcibly detained by Duke Theodo, and consented to labour among his people, as yet only half reclaimed from heathenism. Before the close of the century (696), Rupert, Bishop of Worms, at the invitation of another Theodo, sought to reclaim the people, many of whom, after the death of Emmeran, had relapsed into idolatry. With his companions, he went about from place to place preaching, and at length obtained from the duke the site of the ancient

Juvavium—still strewn with the remains of Roman temples and baths—and there built a church, the precursor of the cathedral of Salzburg; and on a neighbouring eminence erected a convent, of which his niece Ermentrudis was the first abbess. The Church of Salzburg soon became the parent of many others in Bavaria and Corinthia, and a missionary centre from which the light of Christian civilization was diffused over the neighbouring regions.*

* In this account of the Celtic missionaries, we have borrowed freely from Dr. Maclear's "History of Church Missions during the Middle Ages."

THE CAROLINGIAN LINE.



CHAPTER XI.

THE MAYORS OF THE PALACE.

Original functions of the major-domus—Gradual growth of his powers—Pepin of Landen—Mayoralty of Grimoald—Supremacy of the Neustrians under Queen Bathilidis and the mayor Erchinoald—Ebroin elected to the mayoralty—Replaced by St. Ledger—Pepin of Heristal—Struggle between the mayors of Neustria and Austrasia—Victory of Pepin—His sole mayoralty—Nominates his grandson mayor under guardianship of his wife Plectrudis—Charles is elected Duke of Austrasia—Struggle with Rainfroy—Obtains the sole mayoralty—His wars—The Saracen invasion of France—Defeated by Charles Martel at Poitiers—Seizure of Church estates—His mayoralty—Carloman and Pepin the Short succeed to the mayoralty—Carloman resigns and becomes a monk—Pepin's sole mayoralty—Is elected king.

THE major-domus of the Frankish kings was originally no more than his name implies—a kind of steward of the royal household, the manager of all the royal estates and servants.

The office gradually grew in importance. We learn from Gregory of Tours, that in his time the major-domus was also virtually president of the council, and commander of the armed retainers

whom the king maintained in his service. The king usually conferred the office upon some distinguished warrior and capable man of affairs in whom he had confidence. It is easy to see that during a minority, and even during the reign of a king who was more inclined to indulge in the pleasures than to fulfil the arduous duties of his rank, the major-domus must have wielded a very considerable authority and influence.

It was when Sigebert I. was assassinated, and Brunhilda was in captivity, and the Austrasians elected their son Childebert II.—a boy of six years old—king, that the office of mayor seems to have begun to assume something of its subsequent political prominence, as representative of the executive government. When the revolution in which Brunhilda perished stipulated that the major-domus should be elected by the people, it made his office a constitutional check upon the royal prerogative. When Clothaire III. placed Dagobert on the throne of Austrasia, and committed the actual government to Pepin, the major-domus, and Arnulf, Bishop of Metz, then it was that the possession of this great office by the most powerful of the Austrasian nobles laid the foundation for that gradual aggrandizement of the power of the mayor in the family of Pepin, which ended only in the usurpation of the throne by this powerful, able, and ambitious race.

Pepin of Landen is the first of this great family of whom history makes any mention. He appears to have been the hereditary chief of domains which

correspond with two modern kingdoms, Holland and Belgium. The fact that these domains were the first acquisitions of the Salian tribe on the left of the Rhine, would suggest that the ancestors of Pepin must have been among the most illustrious of those who conquered the first Frank settlements in Gaul. His position on the Frank frontier over against the Frisians must have made it necessary for the duke of the march to maintain a large force, and to be skilful in war. The facts that his wife Itta is counted among the Frankish saints, and that he himself founded the first monastery, that of Meldert, and encouraged a great religious movement in his domains, indicate that it was not merely his military force or skill which made him the leader of the Austrasian nobles.

When Dagobert succeeded his father, and became sole king of the Franks, he was able to throw off the tutelage of Pepin, and to assert the royal power. And when events led to his nomination of his son Sigebert to the throne of Austrasia, he committed him to the guardianship of Cunibert, Archbishop of Cologne, and Adalgisil, mayor of the palace, and found pretexts for detaining Pepin and some other of the most powerful of the Austrasian nobles at the court of Paris. On the death of Dagobert, Pepin returned to the court of Metz, and in conjunction with Cunibert took the direction of affairs.

Pepin, on his death in the year 639, left one son, Grimoald, and a great contest for the mayoralty

ensued; the claim of Grimoald, the leader of the aristocracy, being contested by a certain Otto, who seems to have been the candidate of the popular party, the simple Frank freemen, as opposed to the faction of the nobles. Otto was assassinated by the Duke of the Alemanni in 642; and from that time for fourteen years Grimoald governed under the name of Sigebert III. His administration of Austrasia seems to have been able and beneficial. He was scrupulously deferential to the saintly king, and he strenuously defended the royal prerogative: historians account for this policy by the secret ambitions which the sequel disclosed. The monastic enthusiasm was at its height in the north and east of the Frankish territory, and the mayor and his family seconded the wishes of the king in its encouragement. Grimoald aided in the foundation of the two abbeys of Stavelot and Malmedy by St. Remaclus. The mother of Grimoald, St. Itta, and his sister, St. Gertrude, founded the monastery of Nivelles. His other sister, St. Begga, the wife of Angesil, the son of St. Arnulf, founded the abbey of Ardennes. It is said that Grimoald's deference to the king was prompted by his desire to induce Sigebert to adopt his son as heir to the throne. Failing this, on the king's death in A.D. 656, he cut the hair of his son Dagobert and sent him to a monastery in Ireland, and placed his own son on the throne.

The usurpation was premature. The Austrasian nobles were not willing to yield an hereditary

royalty to one of their own body; the people were not prepared to recognize any king but one of the sacred Merovingian blood. The father and son were sent to the King of Neustria, by whom they were first imprisoned and afterwards slain.

The only descendant of Pepin was an infant son of Begga and Angesil, viz. Pepin of Heristal. The late attempt of Grimoald had no doubt obscured the prestige of her family, and had thrown the politics of Austrasia into confusion. The result was the subjection of Austrasia to Neustria. The able Queen Bathildis and Erchinoald, the mayor of the palace of Neustria, conducting the government of the young king, Clovis II., extended their authority over the whole of the Frank dominions.

On the death of Erchinoald (658), Ebroin, another Neustrian mayor, was elected at a national assembly through the influence of Bathildis, and ably espoused the policy which aimed at maintaining the royal prerogative, and extending it over the whole of the empire. But on the death of Clovis II., while his eldest son Clothaire III. succeeded him on the throne of Paris, the Austrasians obtained the nomination of his second son Childeric II. to the throne of Metz, and exercised their right to elect a mayor of their own—a "new man," named Wulfoald.

We come now to a violent counter-revolution. On the death of Clothaire III., Ebroin, instead of summoning an assembly of the people to elect a successor, placed his infant brother Theodoric on

the throne, proposing to continue to govern in his name. But the people of Neustria and Burgundy opposed this *coup d'état*, and offered the crown to the Austrasian king, Childeric II. Ebroin and Theodoric were sent into confinement in the monastery of Luxeuil. Childeric moved his court to Paris. The most able of the opponents of Ebroin, Leodegaire,* Bishop of Autun, became the virtual minister, though Wulfoald retained the title of mayor. But Childeric soon developed the instincts of his race; he grew tired of the tutelage of Leodegaire, and sent him to join his rival Ebroin in confinement at Luxeuil; and began to resume all the habits of a despotic king.

This resulted in the king's assassination. The mayor, Wulfoald, fled to Austrasia. Theodoric, Ebroin, and Leodegaire came out from their seclusion, and recommenced their intrigues. Ebroin proved the more able man. He placed Theodoric on the throne, imprisoned Leodegaire, and ruled with a strong hand.

Wulfoald recalled Dagobert from Ireland, and placed him on the throne of Austrasia. But he also exercised his power too despotically. The nobles rose against him, deposed him, formally tried and condemned him, and put him to death. Pepin of Heristal and his cousin Martin appear after this revolution in the front of affairs, and it would seem as if the young dukes of Austrasia had been the leaders in the recent revolution.

* St. Ledger.

In Austrasia this revolution definitively settled the power of the aristocratic party, of which henceforward the family of Pepin is the leader. But in Neustria the return of Ebroin to power was the triumph of the opposite principle, for Ebroin vigorously maintained the power of the crown, sought to extend the influence of Neustria over Austrasia, and therewith to extend his own authority as minister of the crown over the whole of the Frank dominions.

The next phase of the history is the struggle between the two races and the two principles for the supremacy, each under the conduct of its mayor of the palace. We need not enter into details. Austrasia began the war, and in its early years sustained several defeats; but in the battle of Testry, A.D. 687, the Neustrians sustained a great defeat: their mayor, Bertaire, fell a victim to the rage of his own troops, the king fled to Paris, and there surrendered to his conqueror. Pepin treated the king with respect, and concluded a peace with him on the condition that he should be accepted by the king as mayor of the palace in Neustria as well as in Austrasia. Thus Austrasia finally prevailed over Neustria—the Frank over the Latin element in the mixed empire. The limitation of the power of the Merovingian crown was finally won, and Pepin of Heristal grasped the virtual government of the whole of the Frank dominions.

The sole kings of the Franks since Dagobert had fixed their court in Neustria. Pepin, on the

contrary, continued to reside on his hereditary domains, and thus transferred the centre of the government to Austrasia, where it continued for the whole duration of the Frank Empire. Wisely respecting the jealousy of the nobles and the attachment of the people to the Merovingian family, he contented himself with the substance of power, which he wielded with wisdom and vigour for twenty years. Yet he styled himself "Dux et Princeps Francorum," and dated the public acts by the years of his own rule as well as those of the king's reign—"Regnante Rege, gubernante N. Majoredomus."

The special feature of his rule which it concerns us to note is that he, no longer content with keeping the barbarians on the eastern frontier of the Frank dominions in check by frequent warlike operations, began to wage a war of conquest against them, and to plant civilization and Christianity among them. Thus, under a treaty which Pepin imposed upon Radbod, the Duke of the Frisians, the English Willebrord, with twelve companions, laboured among them with considerable success, and founded the see of Utrecht, the first which had been founded in the countries beyond the limits of the ancient empire.

Pepin of Heristal thought that his long and successful administration of twenty years had consolidated the power of his family, and that he might treat his office as hereditary. He made his two sons mayors of Neustria and Burgundy, and on

their death he nominated his infant grandson as his successor in the mayoralty of the whole kingdom, under the guardianship of his wife Plectrudis.

But the times were not yet ripe for such a step. The Franks might accept an infant for king, provided he were of the sacred race, because the king's duties were only those of representation; but the mayor of the palace must still be the real chief of the people, the guide of their counsels, and their leader in war.

Pepin had left another son—these mayors of the palace assumed as much licence in their domestic relations as the kings—by a second wife, Alpaida. St. Lambert, Bishop of Maestrict, had denounced this second marriage as adulterous, and Count Odo, the brother of Alpaida, had slain the bishop in the sanctuary of his cathedral in revenge. The son of this second connection was Karl, or Charles, who had inherited the great qualities of his father.

Plectrude feared the ambition and ability of her rival's son, and had him imprisoned at Cologne. But the Austrasians rose and released him, and hailed him as Duke of Austrasia in his father's stead.

The Neustrians, also, refusing to recognize this hereditary transmission of the mayoralty, elected Rainfroy as their major-domus, and the strife which had existed between Ebroin and Pepin was renewed between Rainfroy and Charles. At this crisis Clothaire IV. died, and Karl arranged the rival claims by consenting to acknowledge Chil-

peric II. as King of Austrasia, on condition of his own recognition as major-domus of Neustria. Thus he again united in one hand both the royalty and the mayoralty of the two great divisions of the empire (A.D. 717).

But the enemies of the Franks took advantage of the weakness caused by their divisions to attack them. The Saxons, aided by the Frisians, invaded the empire on the side of Belgium, and five times penetrated to the Rhine, and five times were defeated and driven back within their own limits. The Aquitanians had gradually grown into great prosperity under their hereditary dukes of the Merovingian race, who regarded with natural jealousy the rise of the power of the family of Pepin on the ruin of the royal power, and needed the experience of more than one unsuccessful campaign before they recognized the authority of the major-domus.

The Swabians and Bavarians also sought to resume their ancient independence. But the active and able mayor marched his Austrasian warriors on the frontiers of the Rhine and the Elbe, on the Loire and the Rhone, and everywhere maintained the authority of his administration and the integrity of the kingdom.

And now a new and more formidable enemy had to be confronted. In A.D. 710, the Saracens of Africa, invited by the treachery of Count Julian, had invaded Spain. One great battle, in which the Goths were defeated and their king Roderick slain, broke for ever the power of the Visigothic king-

dom; and within two years, with the exception of those who had taken refuge in the mountains of the Asturias and of Castile, they had made themselves masters of the whole of Spain. Then they had crossed the Pyrenees, and established themselves in Septimania. During fifteen years they made incursions over the south of Gaul as far as the Rhone, and even penetrated into Burgundy. They invaded Aquitaine, but Eudon, the duke, defeated them and drove them out of his province.

But now a revolution in Spain placed another dynasty on the Moorish throne, and was followed by a supreme effort to carry forward the Mohammedan conquests into Europe. When the descendants of the house of Abbas, by a successful revolution, replaced the Ommayades on the throne of Damascus, a youth named Abdalrhaman alone escaped from the destruction of the royal family. He fled to Spain, and was received there by the adherents of his family as their sovereign, and established a separate caliphate at Cordova. Abdalrhaman sought to continue the long career of Mohammedan conquest. He burst into Aquitaine. A count of Poitiers, who alone made any resistance to the invasion, was taken and decapitated. The invaders marched on into the very centre of France, taking some of its wealthiest towns. They approached Tours, the hallowed sanctuary of the patron saint, enriched by the offerings of ages. It was not a mere predatory invasion, like those with which the Moors had harassed the country for

years past; they came with their families and possessions, intending to settle on the lands which they hoped to conquer. Duke Eudon, unable to make head against the invasion, sought help from the powerful mayor. Charles gathered troops, and hastened to the defence of the empire.

It was as the Moorish armies marched towards the assault of Tours that the army of the Franks met them. The Arab authors describe the meeting of the armies as having taken place close to Tours; the Gallic chroniclers indicate an extensive plain outside Poitiers as the famous battle-field. Perhaps the series of engagements, which lasted for several days, began at Tours, and the decisive battle took place at Poitiers. Abdalrhaman was slain, and his forces were routed with great slaughter. The survivors retired within their own limits, and the progress of the Mohammedan conquests was definitively arrested. It was one of the decisive battles of history; it obtained for the great major-domus the name of Martel—the Hammer—and the lasting gratitude of the Christian world.

The special feature of the mayoralty of Charles Martel is that the character of his civil wars against Neustria, Aquitaine, and Burgundy was almost that of a reconquest of those countries, accompanied by all the violences of barbarian invasion, and followed by a political revolution. Austrasian Franks were settled in the conquered countries, to garrison them on behalf of the conqueror. The

estates of the Church were specially seized upon to furnish fiefs for the soldiers of the mayor, and it has afforded cause of undying reproach against the name of the Hammer of the Saracens that he thus set the example of plundering the Church.

Charles was not, so far as we know him, of a character to plunder the Church wantonly. He pursued the policy of his family in encouraging the spread of Christianity and the founding of churches and monasteries in the eastern portion of his dominions and conquests. But we have already seen the way in which the bishoprics and monasteries of Gaul had aggregated the estates of great and wealthy families, so that the Church held a very large proportion of the cultivated lands of the country. We can readily suppose that this was a cause of military and financial weakness to the state, and that the warlike mayor thought it true policy to convert some of this great wealth to the purposes of rewarding the soldiers who had saved it from the Saracen, and to redistribute some of those vast landed possessions in the interest of the state.

What was of greater importance was, that amidst these wars and revolutions religion and learning had greatly suffered. The Church of Gaul had fallen into disorder, and the religion of the country had been reduced to its lowest point of degradation; and these evils had been aggravated by the abuse of influence by the mayor in thrusting unfit persons upon the benefices of the Church. Boni-

face, on the point of paying a visit to the court of the mayor, describes it to his friend, Daniel of Winchester (A.D. 723), in these terms: "I shall find at his court false and hypocritical pastors, enemies of the Church of God; murderers and adulterers clothed in episcopal titles, who destroy their own souls and those of the people. . . . What have I not to fear from the influence of such men upon the people to whom I go to preach the faith of Jesus Christ in its purity!"

We shall have in a subsequent chapter to deal connectedly with the relations of the mayors of the palace with the Roman See, but it is convenient to mention here the fact that when the Lombards, who had conquered the exarchate of Ravenna, were demanding the submission of the city of Rome, its bishop, Gregory III., sent an embassy to the powerful major-domus, asking his intervention, and, it would seem, offering to withdraw the nominal allegiance which the Romans still paid to the Eastern emperor, and to transfer their allegiance to one who had the power to protect them. It is difficult to see in what other light we can understand the fact that the Roman ambassadors tendered to the Frank mayor the keys of Rome, the keys of St. Peter, and the title of patrician. A request to that effect from Charles, whose alliance was sought also by the Lombards against the emperor, was enough to induce them for the moment to suspend their action against Rome.

The most striking evidence of the undisputed

authority of the latter years of the rule of Charles, is that when Theodoric IV., the successor of Childeric II., died in 737 A.D., the major-domus did not appoint any successor, nor did the people take any step towards the election of another king; but the mayor continued to rule for the remaining five years of his life, and then was able to transmit his office as if it had been an hereditary office. He divided it, according to the German custom of inheritance, between his sons. To Carloman, the eldest, he left the mayoralty of Austrasia; to Pepin that of Neustria. To a third illegitimate son, Grypho, he gave some provinces, with which the young prince was dissatisfied, raised war against his half-brothers, and went through a series of romantic adventures, which terminated in an early death. The subject nations again, on the death of the great Karl, made a great effort to reassert their independence, but the two brothers acted in concert, struck rapid and powerful blows, and speedily made good their supremacy. They found it, however, prudent to fill the vacant throne with an infant Merovingian, Childeric III.

In a short time Carloman laid down his office, to adopt a religious life. His motives, says Eginhard, are unknown, unless perhaps out of love of the contemplative life. He went with a great train and with costly presents to Rome, and there, by the advice of Pope Zachary, he became a monk and built a monastery on Mount Soracte; and subsequently he retired to that of Monte Cassino. The

powers of the empire were again united in the hand of Pepin the Short.

Pepin was not deficient in warlike energy; he administered the affairs of government with a firm hand; but the distinctive character of his policy is his alliance with the Church. He took Boniface for his adviser in ecclesiastical matters, and aided him in reforming the abuses of the Frankish Church, and bringing it into closer relations with the Roman See.

Throughout this period we feel the lack of a competent contemporary historian. We are not told what led up to the accomplishment of the change of dynasty which had so long been impending, and which had proved so difficult of accomplishment. We dimly see that it was resolved to counteract the superstitious reverence of the Franks for their Merovingian kings by an appeal to their religious veneration for the see of Rome. It was no doubt with the consent of the principal men in Church and State, and no doubt after having previously sounded the pope, that Burchard, Archbishop of Wurzburg, and Fulrad, the chaplain of Pepin, were sent on an embassy to Rome to ask the pope's solution of the question whether it was right that the royal name and dignity should be borne by one who had ceased to have any real power or authority, or whether he who possessed the authority and endured the labour of the government ought not to bear the name and dignity of king.

The pope's answer was, as had no doubt been

previously ascertained, that he who really governed the kingdom should bear the title and dignity of king. The pope's reply was made known to the great annual assembly of the Franks at the ensuing Champ de Mai. Pepin was raised upon a shield, after the ancient German manner, and borne thrice through the throng as the recognized king of the Franks. The religious feeling of the people was also appealed to on behalf of the new dynasty by a solemn anointing of the new king in the basilica of Soissons. The dethroned dynasty was so little formidable that it was considered enough to cut the hair of Childeric and send him to the cloister. He was not the only royal monk; Carloman was already cheerfully digging in the garden at Monte Cassino, and a Lombard king, Rachis, was cultivating the vines of the same monastery. True, they had voluntarily embraced the religious life, and he had been compelled to submit to it, and that makes a great difference.

The danger of the precedent was seen very clearly, and pope and king did their best to make all men understand that this precedent was not to be taken to consecrate the title of every successful usurper, but that this was the solemn inauguration of a new dynasty in place of one which had become incapable of fulfilling its duties. And we must do both pope and major-domus and Frank people the justice to say that they had not been hasty in dethroning the Merovingian dynasty, and that, in the language of the high politics of the present day, they

only recognized the logic of events when they at length acknowledged the Carolingian dynasty as royal.

The march of events in Italy soon afforded the see of Rome an opportunity of claiming from the gratitude of King Pepin a service in return for the crown and title it had given him. But we shall find it convenient to take a separate survey of the affairs of Italy, which were bringing about relations between the see of Rome and the dynasty of King Pepin which were destined so largely to affect the future history of both.

CHAPTER XII.

BONIFACE.

Boniface, his birth, etc.—His missionary journey to Frisia—Return to England—First visit to Rome—Missionary work in Germany—Second visit to Rome, and consecration as regionary bishop—His labours among the Germans—Third visit to Rome—Receives the pall—Organizes the Churches of Bavaria—Founds sees and monasteries in Swabia and Thuringia—His influence in the reformation of the Gallic Church—Council of Lestines—Council of Soissons—Foundation of Fulda—Martyrdom of Boniface—His character.

We have next to speak of one who exercised a greater influence upon the Church history of this Frankish kingdom than any other, not merely by the larger extent of his own missionary labours and successes, but also by the completion and organization of the work of his missionary predecessors in Eastern Germany, by the revival and to some extent reformation of the Church in Neustria, and by the communication of new energy, power, and unity to the whole Church of the Frankish dominions.

Boniface, whose original name was Winfrid, was

of a noble Devonshire family, (A.D. 680), educated at the monastery of Nutcelle, in Hampshire, and at the age of thirty-five years had obtained a high reputation for learning and ability, when (in A.D. 716), seized with the prevalent missionary enthusiasm, he abandoned his prospects at home, and set out with two companions to labour among the Frisians. He found the Frisians, under Duke Radbod, at war with Charles Martel, devastating the churches and monasteries which the Franks had already founded among them. Winfrid was refused permission by the duke to preach in his dominions, and he returned home to England. In the following spring he went to Rome, where he remained for some months, and then, with a general authorization from the pope to preach the Gospel in Central Europe, he crossed the Alps, passed through Bavaria into Thuringia, where he began his work.

While here the death of Radbod, A.D. 719, and the conquest of Frisia by Charles Martel opened up new prospects for the evangelization of that country, and Boniface went thither and laboured for three years among the missionaries, under Willibrord of Utrecht. Then, following in the track of the victorious forces of Charles Martel, he plunged into the wilds of Hessia, converted two of its chiefs, whose example was followed by multitudes of the Hessians and Saxons, and a monastery arose at Amöneburg as the head-quarters of the mission. The Bishop of Rome, being informed of this success, summoned Boniface to Rome, A.D. 723, and con-

secrated him a regionary bishop, with a general jurisdiction over all whom he should win from paganism into the Christian fold, requiring from him at the same time the oath which was usually required of bishops within the patriarchate of Rome, of obedience to the see. With this dignity, and bearing letters of commendation to the Frankish major-domus, and to the Bishops of Bavaria and Swabia, and the chiefs of the countries in which he proposed to labour, he recrossed the Alps, visited the court of Charles, and under his protection returned to Hessia. There he produced at once a great impression on the minds of the superstitious people by felling the great sacred oak of Thor at Geismar, and building a church out of its timbers. He laboured successfully among the Hessians for ten years; heathen temples disappeared, and churches arose in their place, monastic cells were founded, land was cleared and cultivated, and the pious simple lives of the missionaries won the hearts of the rude tribesmen. An appeal to his native England for more labourers brought him out both men and women, books, and other supplies. He planted monastic colonies at Ordrop, Fritzlar, and Hamanaburg. On the death of Gregory II., in the same year in which Charles Martel gained his great victory over the Saracens, Boniface again visited Rome, and this time with a numerous retinue of Franks, Burgundians, and Anglo-Saxons. The new pope received the most successful missionary bishop of the time with deserved honour,

invested him with the pall, gave him the authority of a legate of the Roman See, and authorized him to visit and regulate the Bavarian Church. On his return through Bavaria, in concert with its Duke Odilo, he executed this commission, and added to the solitary see of Passau those of Salzburg, Freisingen, and Ratisbon, with a view to regulate the ecclesiastical lawlessness which prevailed. He was now joined by a kinswoman, Walpurga, who had been a nun in the convent of Wimburn, and who had brought out with her thirty sisters; and by their help he founded convents of women at Heidenheim, in Swabia, where Walpurga and her brother built a church and a double monastery of monks and nuns, others at Bischofsheim on the Tuber, at Kilzingen in Franconia, in Thuringia, and in Bavaria. He also founded four new sees in Hessia and Thuringia.

In 741, the great Charles Martel died. Boniface had the entire confidence of his sons and successors, Carloman and Pepin. They, as we have seen, had first to suppress the revolt of the dependent nations; that done, they set themselves to that which is the characteristic work of their reign, the reformation of the Frank Church.

Hitherto we have seen Boniface only as a missionary of a grand and statesmanlike calibre, evangelizing heathen nations, and organizing among them the institutions of the Church. The genius which he had shown in this work, and the experience he had gained in it, were now to be

employed in the restoration of order and religion in the Churches of Neustria and Austrasia. It was not only his personal qualities which fitted him to be the adviser of the ecclesiastical policy of the mayors of the palace; his official character as Legate of the Roman See gave him a prestige, which, backed by the power of the mayors, enabled him to play the part of visitor of the Churches and corrector of their abuses. It was indeed an unprecedented exercise of the authority of the Bishop of Rome. But the disorder in the Frankish Church, the abeyance of metropolitan authority, the disuse of synods, the disorderly lives of the bishops and clergy, the general decay of religion, the want of some harmonizing and controlling authority over the Churches of the various states which were included within the Frankish dominions, and over the monasteries and clergy of the Celtic school,—all these things probably led men to recognize the utility of a central authority with a vast prestige, which could step in and reduce to order and harmony the whole ecclesiastical system within the Frankish dominions. The patriarchal authority which the Roman See had for some centuries been claiming, had become familiar to the thoughts of men, and seemed to offer such a central authority. The vast services, the personal character of Boniface, served to recommend the legatine power with which he was invested. The mayors of the palace welcomed so statesmanlike a plan for the reformation and consolidation of the Church within their

dominions; the bishops were perhaps conscious that their previous disorders deprived them of the power of resistance to the proposed method of reforming them.

At a preliminary council, held A.D. 742, Boniface laid before the mayors and their principal councillors the reforms which he advised; and when the way had thus been prepared, an assembly was convoked at Lestines in the following year (743), for a general consideration and resettlement of the affairs of the Church throughout the Frank dominions. On one hand the Church had to complain of the State. Charles Martel had laid hands freely on the property of the Churches to support the expenses of his wars; he had granted its estates as rewards to his followers. The Church had to complain of the presentation of unfit men to bishoprics and abbeys, and of a wide-spread practice of simony. On the other hand, earnest-minded men had to complain of the Church; of bishops who lived secular lives, and who did not look after their clergy; of clergymen who neglected their flocks, and made no effort to exterminate the heathenism which still lingered among them.

This famous council of Lestines, like many of the assemblies of this period, consisted of the nobles and councillors of the sovereign, as well as of the bishops and abbots of the Church, and was half royal council, half ecclesiastical synod. The importance of the assembly will be seen at once in the fact that it was the first synod which had

assembled, at least in Austrasian France, for eighty years. We can only briefly name some of the most important regulations of this council. First, the decrees of the council went forth in the name and on the authority of the mayors. The French Church formally recognized the patriarchal authority of the Roman See; the jurisdiction of Boniface as papal legate over the other bishops was duly confirmed; the metropolitan system was revived; it was enacted that, as a token of their willing subjection to the see of Rome, all metropolitans should request the pallium at the hands of the pope, and obey his lawful commands; that synods should be held yearly. It arranged the question of Church property by a compromise which recognized all the property which had got into the hands of laymen as Church property, to revert to the Church on the death of the present holders, who were to pay a quit rent; but left it vaguely in the power of the prince to use the property of the Churches in a similar way in state emergencies, provided the Churches were in no case reduced to poverty. Disciplinary regulations were made requiring clerical celibacy; forbidding the clergy to carry arms, to serve in war, to hunt or hawk—this was clearly aimed at the bishops; others requiring the clergy to be obedient to their bishops, to receive him at his visitation, and give a faithful account of the state of their parishes; others requiring bishops and clergy to be diligent to suppress the remains of heathenism.

We can hardly help regarding all the steps by which the papal power was gradually extended with the prejudice derived from our knowledge of the monstrous height to which it ultimately grew. But if we estimate fairly what was done at this important council, we shall see that there is much to be said in its favour. The barbarians regarded Rome with an almost superstitious reverence, and regarded the Bishop of Rome as the greatest bishop of the West. All that was done at this council amounted to the recognition by the Church of the Frank dominions of the patriarchal authority of Rome, and to the admission that the patriarchal authority included a right of visitation and regulation of the Churches. It was the manifest utility of such a central authority, under the circumstances of the times, which led to the ready acceptance of its interposition. And if this patriarchal authority had never gone further than the encouragement and regulation of missions to the heathen, and the summoning of Churches which had fallen into disorder to hold a synod and put their affairs in order, the Churches of the West might have been content to assent to so useful an authority to the present day. The subsequent history makes it clear that neither the Carolingian princes, nor Boniface, nor the Frankish Church, intended to recognize anything more in Rome than a patriarchal authority as it existed in the ancient constitution of the Church, though by this formal adhesion of the Frank State and Church they un-

doubtedly gave it a power which materially helped its subsequent pretensions.

The next important step in the history is worth giving in detail, since it brings into one view several of the characteristic features of the condition of the Frankish Church at this time. In the year 744, Gerald, Bishop of Mentz, was slain in a war like expedition against the Saxons. His son Gwillieb, though only a layman in Carloman's court, was, by the mayor's influence, consecrated as his successor. In the following year, Carloman led another army against the Saxons, and Bishop Gwillieb followed in his train. When the armies found themselves face to face on either side of the river Wiseraha, Gwillieb sent a messenger to inquire the name of the chief who had slain his father, and having ascertained it, he sent him an invitation to meet him in friendly conference in the midst of the shallow stream. The chief complied. The two met in mid-stream, and during the conference the bishop stabbed the Saxon to the heart. The act of the bishop was the signal for a general engagement, in which Carloman gained a decisive victory. When Gwillieb was remonstrated with, he replied, "Because I am a bishop, shall I not revenge my father's murder?" and he returned to his diocese as if nothing had happened. All this is an illustration of the former state of the Frankish Church. What follows marks the beginning of the new and better state. At the synod of the following year, Boniface made a formal charge

against the homicide bishop, and Gwilleib found himself unable to resist a sentence of deposition. Boniface, with Carloman's consent, assumed the vacant see of Mentz as metropolitan, whence he exercised jurisdiction over the dioceses of Mentz, Worms, Spires, Tongres, Cologne, and Utrecht, as well as over the nations he had won to the Christian faith.

At a council held at Soissons in 744, under the joint authority of the two mayors, among other things done, Adalbert and Clemens, two of Boniface's most energetic opponents, were formally condemned. The former was apparently a fanatic, with a strong following among the lower classes; the latter the champion of the Celtic school, which was strong in the eastern part of the Frankish dominions, and whose maintenance of different ecclesiastical customs and sturdy spirit of independence had, since Columbanus's time, been a source of discord in the Frankish Church.

In A.D. 744, Boniface founded in the wild forest of Bucchenau, in the hilly country between Hesse and Bavaria, a hundred miles east of the Rhine, the monastery of Fulda, which was destined to become, among the monasteries of Germany, what Monte Cassino already was in Italy.

After Carloman's abdication, in A.D. 747, Boniface began to withdraw from public life, requesting the pope to depute some one else as papal commissary at the synods. He resigned his see of Mentz, appointing his countryman and disciple

Lull as his successor. It had been his intention to end his days in his monastery of Fulda, but feeling attracted towards the scene of his early labours, he set out once more on a missionary visit to Frisia. Many thousands were baptized, and Boniface appointed a large number of them to meet him at a place near Docum, on Whitsun Eve, to receive the rite of confirmation. Instead of the converts whom he expected, he found himself surrounded by a body of armed pagans. Boniface forbade resistance, and they conferred on him a martyr's death. The book of the Gospels which he held in his hand when he was killed, and which was stained with his blood, is still kept as a relic.

Boniface was not only a zealous missionary, an earnest preacher, a learned scholar, but he was a statesman and an able administrator. He not only spread the Gospel among the heathen, but he organized the Church among the newly converted nations of Germany; he regulated the disorder which existed in the Frankish Church, and established the relations between Church and State on a settled basis.

The mediæval analysts tell us that Boniface crowned Pepin king, and modern writers have usually reproduced the statement. "Rettberg, and the able writer of the biography of Boniface in Herzog (Real Ecyk, *s.v.*), argue satisfactorily from Boniface's letters that he took no part in Pepin's coronation." *

* Smith's "Dictionary of Christian Biography."

When Boniface withdrew from the active supervision of the Frankish Churches, it is probable that his place was to some extent supplied in the councils of the mayor and in the synods of the Church by Chrodegang, Bishop of Metz, a man whose character and influence in the history of the Frank Church have hardly hitherto been appreciated.* Born of noble parents in the early part of the eighth century, he passed the early part of his life at court, and was promoted by Charles Martel to the office of "Referendarius," or chancellor. By favour of Pepin he was in 842 elected to the important see of Metz, still retaining his civil office, and is one of the first of the long line of statesman-bishops which did not terminate in Europe till the seventeenth century. A man of great ability and force of character, one of the most trusted counsellors of the sovereign, and at the same time one of the foremost prelates of the Church, possessing great wealth, which he used with princely and episcopal munificence, he exercised a very powerful influence, and that influence was exercised in the direction of ecclesiastical reform.

The most important and lasting of his reforms was the organization of the clergy of his cathedral into a community living under a religious rule. The aim of the statesman-bishop was to secure better discipline of the clergy of the cathedral. To this end he gathered them into a clergy-house (*monasterium*), and required them to live a common

* Smith's "Dictionary of Christian Biography."

life, under a rule. The idea of the clergy of a cathedral living thus together a common life, together with their bishop, dates back to the time of St. Augustine, and had never been lost sight of. What Chrodegang did was to revive this mode of life, and to adapt the rule of St. Benedict, which was being pressed upon all the monasteries, to the circumstances of the body of secular clergy forming the staff of a cathedral. In the cathedral monasterium the bishop takes the place of the abbot, the archdeacon of the prior. The clergy are called *Canonici*, instead of *Monachi*. They eat in a common refectory, they sleep in a common dormitory, and observe the hours of prayer. But they do not vow poverty or obedience; and in the refectory they are not all seated together as equals, but at seven different tables according to their clerical order—the first table for the bishop, archdeacon, and guests, the second for priests, and the others in the descending scale of the ecclesiastical hierarchy.

The rule thus established by Chrodegang for his own cathedral was introduced into others; it was adopted at the Council of Aachen in A.D. 716, and made obligatory upon all the cathedral bodies of the whole of the wide dominions of Charlemagne; and was the basis of the constitutions of all the cathedral bodies of (continental) mediæval Europe.

Chrodegang also took steps to improve the discipline of the rest of the clergy, and promoted to that

end the holding of annual synods. He sought also to control the extravagances and abuses of the numerous solitaries by requiring them to live either as cloistered monks, or under the bishop in "canonical order."

CHAPTER XIII.

RELATIONS BETWEEN THE MAYORS OF THE PALACE AND ROME.

The barbarian occupation of Italy – The last emperors—Count Ricimer—Count Odoacer—Deposes Augustulus—Extinguishes the Western Empire, and reigns as patrician—Theodoric, King of the Goths—His widow, Amalasuntha, marries Theodatus—Justinian's ambition—Wars of Belisarius—Invasion of the Lombards—Foundation of their kingdom in North Italy—History of Rome during this period—Rome appeals to Charles Martel for aid against the Lombards.

In Gaul, Spain, and Africa, the barbarians seized portions of the empire as invaders, and held possession by right of conquest; in Italy the barbarians themselves composed the armies of the empire, and thus were able to make themselves masters of its fortunes; and they exercised virtual rule by nominating the emperor and controlling his administration.

In the twenty years which succeeded the death of Valentinian, the last of the family of the great Theodosius, nine emperors had successively worn the

purple. During the greater part of this period, Count Ricimer, the commander of the barbarian troops which formed the military defence of Italy, stood beside the throne making and unmaking emperors and controlling their power. In vain Majorian, with abilities and virtues worthy of the best days of Rome, strove to restore the fortunes of the empire; in vain Anthemius endeavoured to maintain the dignity of the purple; the attempt to make themselves independent of Ricimer cost them their lives. When Ricimer died, Orestes, the next commander of the armies, being a Roman, placed his son Augustulus upon the throne. The troops demanded that a third of the lands of Italy should be allotted among them, as landed settlements had been allotted to their barbarian kindred in other parts of the empire. Orestes was too much a Roman to concede this demand, and a mutiny of the discontented troops put into the hands of Odoacer the command of the armies and the fortunes of Italy.

Odoacer felt himself strong enough to depose Augustulus, and secure enough to allow the deposed emperor to live in luxurious retirement, while he assumed openly to himself the government of Italy. The transaction was a very remarkable one, and had an important bearing upon the subsequent revival of the Imperial title by Charlemagne. The barbarian who thus thrust the last of the line of the Western emperors from his throne, did not pretend to take upon himself the august Imperial dignity and its great political claims. He con-

tented himself with assuming in Italy the same position which other barbarian kings had assumed in other parts of the empire. But the whole political situation as it existed throughout the West was based upon the theory of the Imperial constitution. The barbarian kings were kings of their own nations, but they ruled their Latin subjects by the Imperial law under the decent pretext of being the authorized delegates of the Imperial authority, and often under the grand names of consul or patrician.

Odoacer had the political sagacity to perceive that this Imperial theory would serve its purpose quite as well, and that the theory would correspond more accurately with the facts, if it were transferred to the court of Constantinople as its centre. Accordingly, the unfortunate young emperor was required to resign his *Imperium* into the hands of the senate, and the senate was required to abdicate its right to elect a successor. They sent an embassy to convey the Imperial ornaments to Constantinople, and at the same time, in an epistle addressed to the Emperor Zeno, they solemnly "disclaim the necessity, or even the wish, of continuing any longer the Imperial succession in Italy; since in their opinion the majesty of a sole monarch is sufficient to pervade and protect at the same time both the East and the West. In their own name, and in the name of the people, they consent that the seat of universal empire shall be transferred from Rome to Constantinople. . . . The republic might safely confide in the civil and military virtues of Odoacer, and they

humbly request that the emperor would invest him with the title of Patrician, and the administration of the diocese of Italy." They erected statues of Zeno in the public places of Rome, in acknowledgment of his sovereignty. The patrician exercised his power with moderation. The Latin population was still governed by the Imperial laws, and the civil administration was still conducted according to ancient precedents by the pretorian prefect and his subordinate officers. The Emperor of the East was at first indignant at the suppression of the empire of the West; but he accepted the situation, and prudently kept alive the Imperial forms and claims in the West in view of the possible changes of the future.

The power of Odoacer did not last long.

Theodoric, heir of the royal race of the Ostrogoths, first a hostage in the court of Constantinople, then its ally, undertook, with the connivance of the emperor, the conquest of Odoacer. After a long and arduous and desolating war, the Ostrogothic invaders effected the conquest they had undertaken. Rome accepted Theodoric as a deliverer. Odoacer fled to Ravenna, whose strength enabled him to sustain there a three years' siege, and then to secure the terms of a divided sovereignty, which in a very few days was terminated by his assassination.

Theodoric played in Italy the same part which we have seen Clovis play in Aquitaine. He presented himself and was accepted by the Latin

population as a deliverer; he replaced Odoacer and his followers in the third of the lands of Italy which they had exacted.

During a long reign of thirty-three years he restrained his Goths from oppression, and sought to promote their progress in civilization, while retaining their ancient spirit and their warlike character; he ruled the subject population with justice and moderation. The names of Cassiodorus, Boethius, Symmachus, who were his ministers, are enough to remind us that though Theodoric the Goth ruled in Ravenna, Italy had not ceased to be Roman. Under his firm and just rule Italy enjoyed a season of peace and general prosperity.

On his death (A.D. 526), Theodoric left the government of Italy to his grandson Athalaric, under the guardianship of his widow, the young, beautiful, accomplished, and able Amalasuntha; and on the young king's death the queen sought, by giving her hand and the title of king to her cousin Theodatus, to retain the substance of power in her own hands. But the ungrateful and unworthy prince allowed himself to be put at the head of a faction hostile to the queen, which imprisoned and shortly murdered her.

Justinian had succeeded to the throne of the East (A.D. 527), and had conceived the great design of recovering the severed portions of the Western empire and annexing them to the empire of the East, and thus restoring once more the empire of Constantine in the power and grandeur of its unity. The genius of a great general made the grand con-

ception of the emperor possible. Belisarius first defeated the Vandals in Africa; was welcomed as a deliverer by the long and cruelly oppressed provincials; and united to the Eastern empire the provinces which had been the most important of the Western.

Justinian next took advantage of the dissensions among the Goths. Belisarius landed in Italy. Rome opened its gates to him. The Goths collected their forces, and wasted them before its walls in a twelvemonths' siege. At length the Goths were worsted; Ravenna surrendered, and Italy became a province of the Eastern empire. The successes of Belisarius had excited jealousy; he was recalled, and Italy was placed under the wise and able rule of the Exarch Narses. The successors of Genseric and of Theodoric were both sent captives to Constantinople, where the generosity of the emperor accorded to them the title of Patrician, and assigned them a princely maintenance. Both parties, we have already had occasion to say, sought aid from the Franks, who, taking advantage of the opportunity, invaded the plains of Italy under Theodebert (A.D. 539), fought impartially against both Goths and Romans, ravaged the country, and plundered the towns of North Italy, left thousands of their number behind dead of famine and disease, while the rest recrossed the Alps in safety with their booty.

Italy had been reunited to the empire only sixteen years when Alboin and his Langobards, with a mixed host of barbarian allies, poured forth from

Pannonia upon the plains of North Italy (A.D. 563). The reputation of their ferocity went before them, and filled the land with terror. Those who could fled, the rest submitted; only Pavia resisted, and sustained a three years' siege, and when taken was adopted by Alboin as his capital city.

But the conduct of the invaders was that of a predatory horde of mere barbarians, delighting as much in carnage and destruction as in plunder, rather than that of men who proposed to inhabit the country they had won. Gregory the Great describes in vivid language how they depopulated cities, ruined castles, burnt churches, destroyed monasteries, wasted farms, showing no reverence for holy places or persons, and left behind them a solitude where wild beasts roamed over fields once smiling with plenty, and peopled with industrious inhabitants.

In truth, they were a horde of barbarians and not yet a nation. When Alboin died, they at once broke up into a number of sections, under independent leaders—Dukes of Friuli, Bergamo, Pavia, Turin, in the north, of Beneventum and Spoletum in the south; while roving bands, each under its independent leader, wandered over Italy, wasting the country, now and then sacking a town, and carrying terror everywhere. Only aften ten years of this confusion did the approach of Childebert of Austrasia, who again descended into Italy, force upon the Lombards the need of uniting their arms against the common enemy, under the command of Antharus (A.D 584), the son of Alboin. The duchies

of North Italy continued to be ruled by him and his successors, but the southern duchies of Beneventum and Spoletum were able, by the advantage of their position, to maintain a virtual independence.

There remained to the empire on the mainland of Italy the impregnable position of Ravenna, with a territory round about it, where the exarch continued to represent the Imperial authority; Venice, protected by its situation; Naples, which was populous and strong enough to defend itself, and soon independent enough to elect its own dukes; and, lastly, Rome, whose strong walls and large population, rather perhaps than its slender Imperial garrison, enabled it to keep the barbarians at bay. No doubt these cities were increased in power and wealth by the influx of many of the noblest and wealthiest of the refugees from Lombard tyranny. The islands of Sicily, Sardinia, and Corsica also, which were out of reach of the Lombards, retained their allegiance to the empire.

This continued to be the political division of Italy for two hundred years. During this period Rome was isolated amidst the Lombard monarchy, which constantly menaced and sometimes assailed its independence. Neither the emperors nor their representatives, the exarchs of Ravenna, were able to help it. The city was thrown upon its own resources, both for its internal government and for its defence against the enemy. The bishop, who was by far the most wealthy, powerful, and influential personage in it, naturally became its leader.

The description which we have already given * of the great cities of Gaul, and of the position of the bishops of its cities under Clovis and his sons, will help us to understand the condition of Rome and the position of its bishop. We have seen how Tours, for example, had been enriched by the estates of several wealthy provincial families. But the Roman See had been enriched by the great houses of Rome with vast estates scattered over Italy and Gaul. The letters of Gregory the Great at this time give us a very interesting picture of the possessions of the see, and the way in which the able prelate, in his capacity of a great landowner, looked sharply after his agents, was a good landlord to his tenants, and cared for the temporal and spiritual well-being of the labourers on his estates. The Bishop of Rome occupied the Lateran Palace which Constantine had given to the see, and maintained considerable state; the withdrawal of the government to Milan, and afterwards to Ravenna, the ruin of the great families by the successive sacks of Rome, had left the bishop the most important personage in it.

We have seen that the sees of the Gallic cities were frequently filled by men of high provincial birth, and who had held great civil offices. So the Roman See was frequently occupied by men of the great historic families, and who had held high office in the state. Gregory, for example, was of a noble and wealthy family, and before he was ordained

* Pp. 90–93.

had held the office of city pretor (*prætor urbanus*), one of the leading magistracies of the city.

The conspicuous position which the bishop held as the representative of the *Respublica* (so they still called it) in its Christian aspect, was shown when Leo went out at the head of a procession to treat with Attila and induced the terrible Hun to accept a ransom and spare the city; and again when the same great bishop similarly went out to meet Genseric, and obtained of the Vandal the promise that the city should not be burnt or the captives tortured.

It is true that these later days of revolution had been troublous times for the see, and that its prestige had suffered some diminution. Theodoric the Goth, Arian though he was, had claimed the right, which had belonged to the emperors, to confirm the elections to the see. In the disputed election of Symmachus and Laurence, he had summoned the candidates before him to Ravenna and decided between them; he had commanded John, with four other bishops and four senators (A.D. 525), to go as his ambassadors to Constantinople, to claim for the Arians of the empire the same toleration which he accorded to the Catholics of Italy. King Theodebert, in A.D. 536, obliged Agapetus to go as ambassador to Justinian to try to avert hostilities. At the end of his life he anticipated the choice of the Romans, and nominated a bishop of Rome from his palace in Ravenna.

The Byzantine emperors had still further lowered

the prestige of the see of Rome. Justinian exercised the right of confirmation of elections to the see. Belisarius deposed Silverius, and sent him in chains to Constantinople, and nominated Vigilius in his stead. Justinian summoned Vigilius to court, and put him in prison. There are few of the holders of the see whose reigns were more inglorious than those of Vigilius, Pelagius I., Benedict I., and Pelagius II.; they were nominated by, and obsequiously obeyed the orders of, not the emperor, but his representative, the Exarch of Ravenna; while the bishops of Constantinople assumed the tone of premier bishops of the empire, and Justinian supported their pretensions.* The prestige of the see of Rome was further lessened by the schism of Aquileia and other Italian provinces, in consequence of the heretical compliance of Vigilius in the controversy on the "Three Articles"—a schism which lasted a century and a half, during which even the nearest neighbours of Rome refused intercommunion with her.

The policy of the Emperor Leo the Isaurian, in commanding the destruction of the sacred images throughout his empire, served to alienate from the empire the sympathies of the whole of its Italian dependencies, and threw them into an attitude of open resistance (A.D. 726–730). Gregory replied to

* On the same grounds on which the see of Arles had claimed the metropolitan dignity in place of Vienne, that the political change which had made Constantinople the sole capital and seat of the Imperial government ought to be followed by the transfer of the ecclesiastical precedence to the bishop of the Imperial see.

the Imperial mandate in a letter of insolent defiance: "You declare, with foolish arrogance, 'I will despatch my orders to Rome, I will break in pieces the image of St. Peter, and Gregory, like his predecessor Martin [who was seized by the exarch (A.D. 653), acting under the orders of the Emperor Constans II., sent to Constantinople, treated with great cruelty, and died in exile], shall be transported in chains and exiled to the foot of the Imperial throne.' Would to God that I might be permitted to tread in the footsteps of the holy Martin! . . . But it is our duty to live for the edification and support of the faithful people, nor are we reduced to risk our safety on the event of a combat. Incapable as you are of defending your Roman subjects, the maritime situation of the city may perhaps expose it to your depredation; but we can remove to the distance of four and twenty stadia, to the first fortress of the Lombards, and then—you may pursue the winds." Ravenna and Venice, as well as Rome, broke out into open revolt. A force sent against Ravenna from Constantinople was defeated. But on the exhortation of the pope the Italians abstained from separating themselves entirely from the empire, and still allowed the exarch to reside—a captive rather than a master—within the walls of Ravenna.

The Lombards did not overlook the opportunity which the circumstances offered of attempting to complete their Italian kingdom. King Luitprand appeared in arms at the gates of Rome, but once more (A.D. 730) Rome was saved by the influence of her

bishop over the impressible mind of an invader. The king listened to the voice of Gregory II., visited the Church of St. Peter, and, after performing his devotions, left armour and mantle, sword and crown, as offerings on the Apostle's tomb, withdrew his troops, and resigned his conquests. Shortly after he resigned his crown, and retired as a monk to Monte Cassino.

It was nine years later that Gregory III. sent that embassy to Charles Martel (A.D. 739) of which we have already spoken; and the Lombards continuing to harass the Roman territory and threaten the city, the pope sent a second and a third appeal for help in the subsequent years (A.D. 740–41). The mayor seems to have entertained the appeal favourably, and to have contemplated some active interposition, when the death of the mayor and of the pope in the same year (A.D. 741), and nearly at the same time, closed this phase of the negotiation. Then, as we have already related, Pepin, on the resignation of Carloman, thought that the time was ripe for putting aside the decayed dynasty and assuming to himself and his race the royal dignity. The new pope, Zacharias, gave a favourable reply to the question referred to him as to the case of conscience involved in the change of dynasty and transfer of allegiance, and strengthened the title of the new royal race with all the sanctions of religion.

The time soon came for the see of Rome to claim at the hands of King Pepin the reward of the service it had rendered him. There was a new

pope, Stephen, and a new king of the Lombards, Aistulf (A.D. 750). The pope, by splendid presents, obtained of the king a promise of a forty years' peace, but the treaty was almost immediately broken. The King Aistulf commenced hostilities against Ravenna, took it, and finally extinguished the Imperial authority there. Then he proceeded to round off the Lombard sovereignty, by summoning Rome to acknowledge allegiance and pay tribute.

The Bishop of Rome sent to the emperor to ask for aid, and at the same time sent to the king of the Franks to ask for his intervention. The court of Constantinople sent one of its great officials, John the Patrician, to make known that the emperor could send no material succours, but to call upon the Bishop of Rome to join him in an embassy to the Lombard king to try what could be done by negotiation. At the same time came Chrodegang, the Chancellor-Bishop of Metz, and Duke Autchardus, whom King Pepin had sent to mediate between the Romans and the Lombards. All four proceeded on their errand to Pavia; but the Lombard king refused all concessions. Then the Bishop of Rome declared his intention to accompany the Frank ambassadors back to their master, and Aistulf did not venture to use force to prevent his journey.

Now for the first time Charlemagne appears upon the stage of history. The young prince was but twelve years old when the king sent him

to greet the illustrious visitor, and to act as his escort of honour. On his near approach, the king himself, with his queen, the younger princes, and his court, in royal pomp, went out a league from his palace of Pontyon-le-Perche to meet him. Stephen and his clergy appeared in sackcloth and ashes as mourners and suppliants, and throwing themselves at the king's feet, besought his aid against the enemy of Rome. The king received the patriarch of the West with extraordinary honours; he prostrated himself in turn before the pope; and when these greetings were over, and the pope mounted his mule, the king walked by his side, holding his bridle-rein.

The pope's stay in Gaul, lengthened by sickness, extended to the summer of the following year. He took up his residence in the Abbey of St. Denis at Paris, the royal abbey founded by Dagobert, which, enriched by the Carolingian princes, and endowed with special privileges by the pope, became, what Westminster Abbey in later times was to the English kings, the scene of the coronation and sepulture of the kings of France.

Meantime, Pepin sent ambassadors to invite Aistulf to abandon his designs upon the city and territory of Rome. Aistulf sent a remarkable ambassador in return, to endeavour to induce Pepin to withdraw his opposition to the natural development of the Lombard kingdom; this was Carloman, the king's brother, who was drawn from his retreat at Monte Cassino—which lay within the Lombard dominions

—and sent on this political errand. It was a fruitless one. It was the policy of the Franks to prevent the aggrandizement of the Lombard kingdom. Pepin formally engaged, in spite of the opposition of some of the most powerful men of the nation, to take up arms if negotiations should fail, in order to keep Rome from the hands of the Lombards. Carloman remained in France, perhaps to keep such a hostage safe from the hands of Aistulf, and died there in the course of the following year.

Rome had something to offer in acknowledgment of the material aid thus promised. At a grand ceremonial in the basilica of St. Denis, the patriarch of the West solemnly consecrated Pepin with holy oil, and with him his wife Bertrada as the sharer of his royal dignity, and his sons as the legitimate heirs of his crown and kingdom, and prohibited the nation of the Franks, on pain of excommunication, from choosing a king outside this royal race. The consecration at Rheims had represented the sanction of the Frankish Church to the change of dynasty, but this solemn consecration by the patriarch of the West gave the highest possible religious prestige to the new dynasty, not only in the eyes of the Franks, but in those also of the dependent nations, and of all the rest of Christendom.

Moreover, the Bishop of Rome conferred at the same time on Pepin and on the young princes, his sons, the title of Patrician of the Romans. But the significance of this act is somewhat doubtful. Patrician was an honorary title which from the time

of Constantine had been bestowed upon a small number of very illustrious persons, and which elevated them to the highest rank next to the Imperial family, but it did not necessarily imply any authority or office: for example, we have just seen that Justinian sought to console with this illustrious title the two conquered princes, the last Vandal king and the last Ostrogothic king, after they had adorned the triumph of Belisarius.

How the bishops of Rome came to offer the title to Charles Martel and Pepin is not clear. We can only conjecture that under the rule of Theodoric the senate of Rome had, at the king's desire, been accustomed to confer honorary titles, and that it was the senate which now, through the Bishop of Rome acting with full powers on behalf of the city, offered the title to the mayors of the palace whose protection they sought. Probably its utmost political significance was that it recognized them as Romans of the highest nominal rank, and as thereby bound to be patrons and protectors of the city.

In the spring Pepin led a considerable army into Italy, inflicted a total defeat in the first battle at Susa, and marched forward, ravaging the country and committing its strong places to the flames. Aistulph retired into the strong city of Pavia, and sought for peace. It was granted on condition that he should recognize the sovereignty of the Frankish king and pay him an annual tribute, that he should restore the Roman territories which he had seized, and abstain from hostilities against the republic.

The Romans were overjoyed at their deliverance, but their joy lasted only a short time. For no sooner had the Franks recrossed the Alps than Aistulf reopened hostilities—wasted the country up to the walls of Rome, and laid siege against the city itself. The pope sent letters again, and yet again, each more urgent than the others. The third appeal was, by a very bold figure of speech, put into the mouth of St. Peter, who in person was represented as addressing the Frank king, asking the protection of the see of which he had long been esteemed the founder and patron, and promising in return a long and victorious life and a place in the kingdom of heaven.

Pepin in the following year returned to Italy, besieged Aistulf in Pavia, reduced him to sue for peace, and imposed upon him as a condition the cession of cities and territory which Pepin bestowed upon the Pope of Rome. Two Imperial envoys who were present urged their master's claim, that the exarchate of Ravenna should be restored to its former condition of immediate dependence upon the Eastern empire. But Pepin replied that he had gone to war for St. Peter, not for the emperor, and added these conquests to the possessions of the Roman See.

This donation of Pepin did not at once make the pope an independent sovereign. The political position was anomalous and complicated. The see, as we have seen, had already very large possessions in Italy, Sicily, Gaul, and elsewhere; Pepin added

the magnificent endowment of these new territories. The Bishop of Rome became the actual ruler of these territories, under the protection of the Frankish king; but in theory neither the Roman republic, nor the Bishop of Rome with respect to these and the other possessions of his see, had formally thrown off their political dependence on the empire; and the public acts continued to be dated by the years of the emperor's reign. The process by which the Bishop of Rome became an independent temporal power was as slow and gradual as that by which the mayor of the palace became king of the Franks.

A few sentences will suffice to conclude the history of the reign of Pepin, and to introduce the central hero of our story.

The southern portion of Gaul, from the Pyrenees on the west to the mouth of the Rhone on the east, called Septimania, had for forty-eight years been under the Mussulman domination, when, in A.D. 759, Pepin, freed from other wars, resolved to employ the military force of his kingdom in driving the Saracens entirely out of France. This was successfully accomplished in one campaign. Then the Frank king found cause of quarrel with Waifre, the Duke of Aquitaine, resolving to reduce these fair provinces between the Loire and the Garonne once more to their former dependence on the Frankish kingdom. It cost nine years of war to effect the conquest. In the course of it we gain a clear view

of the political dangers which surrounded the Frank sovereignty. Tassilon, the hereditary Duke of Bavaria, though the nephew of Pepin, was ready to take any opportunity to reassert the independence of his country. Desederius, or Didier, who had succeeded Aistulf on the throne of the Lombards, was ready to ally himself with the enemies of the Frank. The Greek emperor was induced, by the offer of the restoration of his Italian dominion, to promise the aid of a fleet, which should first recover the exarchate and then make a descent upon Gaul. But all these attempted combinations came to very little. The desertion of the Bavarian contingent only gave a year's respite to Duke Waifre. In successive years Aquitaine was overrun by the invading Franks, who treated the conquered country with all the cruelty of barbarian warfare; towns were burnt, people massacred, vineyards torn up, the country ravaged. Waifre, with a few adherents, was hunted through forest and mountain, and at length assassinated by his own followers. Tassilon returned to his allegiance; the Byzantine fleet failed to appear. Pepin died Sept. 24, 768, twenty-seven years from his succession to the mayoralty, sixteen from his accession to the kingdom, leaving a kingdom which extended from the Rhine to the Pyrenees, from the Alps to the ocean.

CHAPTER XIV.

CHARLES AND CARLOMAN JOINT-KINGS.

Birth, etc., of Charles—Partition of the kingdom between Charles and Carloman—War with Aquitaine—Alliance with the Lombards—Letters of Pope Stephen III.—Charles marries Desiderata—Divorces her—Death of Carloman.

It is a little remarkable that Eginhard, the intimate and secretary of Charles, should have to say that neither he himself, nor any one then living, knew anything about the birth of this prince, nor about his infancy, nor even about his youth. King Pepin had, indeed, associated his two sons with himself, at his consecration by the Bishop of Rome, in the title of king, but he never gave either of them any separate government or employment. They shared with other young nobles the instructions of Peter of Pisa, whom Pepin retained at his court for that purpose. A phrase in a letter of Stephen seems to imply that Pepin took the young princes with him in his Italian expeditions; and there is reason to believe that Charles, at least, accompanied his father in the Aquitanian war; and by that time he

was old enough to profit by the lessons of war on a great scale in which he had the opportunity of taking part.

On the death of Pepin a national assembly was held at St. Denis around his tomb, in which the Franks recognized his two sons as their kings "on condition," says Eginhard, "that they made an equal division of the kingdom, the same as that which had existed in the lifetime of Pepin and Carloman; Charles taking the portion of his father Pepin, and Carloman that of his uncle and namesake. What other division the deceased king had indicated, or had been otherwise contemplated, we are not told; but Carloman considered himself wronged by the actual division. His adherents stimulated his resentment to the edge of a civil war, which was only avoided by the patience of Charles. Recent French writers * say that this division was not a division of the Frank territory into two kingdoms, but only of the administration of the undivided kingdom; and seem to establish, from the dates of the state documents which came out of the chancelleries of the two kings, that in fact they disregarded the limits of the ancient rival kingdoms of Austrasia, Neustria, and Burgundy; that Charles took the administration of the arc of territory embracing Aquitaine, the north of France, and the north-east, while Carloman took the ad-

* Krœber, "Partage du royaume des Francs entre Charlemagne et Carloman," ap. Biblioth. de l'École des Chartres, IV. Serie, t. ii. p. 741, quoted by Alphonse Vetault, "Charlemagne," p. 140.

ministration of the centre, south, and south-east. Charles fixed his court at Noyon, Carloman at Soissons. The elder prince was twenty-six years and a half old, the younger hardly nineteen. Both were already married to wives of Frank race; Charles to Himiltrude, Carloman to Gerberge.

The first affair of moment which tried the quality of the young kings was an uprising of the Aquitanians, who took advantage of the death of their conqueror to break his yoke off their necks. Hunald, the uncle of Waifre, the only survivor of the ancient dynasty, came out of his cloister and raised the standard of revolt. The Aquitanians responded to his summons, and the Frank officials seem to have been unable to make any resistance. The brother kings raised troops and met on the border of Poitou. But then the disagreement between them came to an open rupture, and Carloman withdrew with his forces, leaving Charles to carry on the war alone. At the first encounter Charles won a victory. Hunald fled for refuge to his nephew Lupus, the Duke of Gascony. The Aquitanians submitted. Lupus was summoned to surrender the fugitive; and, having probably assured himself beforehand of a favourable reception, he went in person, accompanied by Hunald, to the camp of Charles, acknowledged allegiance to the Frank king, and surrendered the refugee, who was allowed to retire to Rome and re-enter the cloister there. Charles built the strong fortress of Fronsac on the banks of the Dordogne, and left a strong garrison to secure the province.

We have next to turn to the side of Italy. The queen-mother, Bertrada, used her influence to negotiate an alliance between the Teutonic neighbours, the Frank and the Lombard kingdoms, which she proposed to cement by a double alliance; she offered her daughter Gisela to Adelgis, the son of Didier, and heir to the Lombard throne, and sought Desiderata, the daughter of Didier, for one of the Frank kings.

It was easy to foresee that the sequel of this policy would be that the friendly Frank would allow the Lombard kingdom to complete its natural development in the Italian peninsula, at the expense of Rome. The pope—it was now Stephen III.—wrote to the Frank kings on the subject, a letter which is famous in history: "We have been filled with grief at hearing that Desiderius, the king of the Lombards, seeks to marry his daughter to one of you, which is manifestly a diabolical suggestion. It would not be a marriage, but a coupling together the most degrading imaginable. . . . It would be the height of madness if the glorious race of the Franks, placed so high above all others, if your gentle and noble dynasty should sully itself—which may God forbid—by contact with this Lombard race, perfidious and unclean, unworthy to be counted among nations, by which leprosy is spread through the world. What folly to suppose that kings so illustrious as you could descend to this abominable degradation! . . . Besides, by the will of God and the choice of your father you have

already been united in legitimate marriage with beautiful spouses of your own nation as becomes noble kings, and to them you ought to give your affection. You have not the right to dismiss them in order to marry others. . . . It would be an impiety to add other wives to those you have already accepted. You cannot allow yourselves in such a sin—you who obey the law of God, you who punish the misdeeds of others. Leave it to pagans to act thus, but beware of imitating them—you who are Christians, you who are of a holy race, you whose royalty is a priesthood. Recall to mind the unction with which the hand of the Vicar of St. Peter sanctified you. Recall to mind that our predecessor of pious memory, the Lord Pope Stephen, forbad your glorious father ever to separate from the lady your mother, and that he, like a truly Christian king, submitted to this wholesome injunction." And, after using every argument he can think of, he concludes by an appeal to superstition: "The blessed Peter, Prince of the Apostles, Guardian of the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and invested with the power of binding and unbinding in heaven and on earth, adjures your excellencies by the voice of our Misery,* and by that of all the bishops, priests, clerks, abbots, and religiouses of our holy Church, together with that of our nobles, our magistrates, and our whole Roman people, in the Name of God,

* The rhetoric of the age used such epithets—"your Holiness," "your Excellence," "our Humility," "our Misery." "By the voice of our Misery" here means simply "by my voice."

the living and true, Judge of quick and dead, by the terror of the last judgment, by all the Divine mysteries, by the sacred body of St. Peter, that you do not marry, either of you, the daughter of Desiderius, king of the Lombards, and that your noble sister Gisela be not given to the son of the said Desiderius.

"We address to you this letter of exhortation, bathed with our tears, after having placed it upon the altar of St. Peter and offered the holy sacrifice there. And if either of you—which may God forbid—shall have the temerity to disregard our prohibition, let him know that by the authority of my Lord Peter, Prince of the Apostles, he shall be stricken with an anathema, rejected from the presence of God, and devoted to eternal flames with the demon, in the midst of his execrable pomps, and in the society of the wicked. On the other hand, in respecting and keeping our commands, the blessings of God will adorn your life, and you will deserve to enjoy eternal recompenses with all the saints and all the elect."

The Frank kings and their mother seem to have estimated this monstrous medley of worldly policy, bad language, scolding, and blasphemy, more justly than we might have expected. It did not prevent them from persisting in their design. Bertrada herself was the negotiator of her own plan. She first visited the court of Bavaria and confirmed Tassilo in his allegiance. She went thence to Pavia, and concluded an offensive and defensive

alliance between the Franks and Lombards; she procured the restitution of some of the papal estates lying on the Lombard territory which the king had seized, and inserted a clause in the treaty stipulating for the inviolability of the pontifical territory. Then she proceeded to Rome itself, and possibly induced the pope to withdraw his objections to the alliance. But whether the pope did or did not, the plan went on. Charles repudiated * Himiltrude, who had borne him a son, Pepin the Hunchback, and a daughter, Rothrada, and married Desiderata. The other marriage, of Gisela and Adelgis, was not celebrated at the same time, and never took place; Gisela became a nun at Chelles, and in time the abbess of that convent.

The pope, however, had soon his turn of triumph. After a very few months, Charles divorced Desiderata on the ground that she was of sickly constitution and incapable of bearing him children, and with a very short interval married Hildegard. The repudiation of Desiderata broke the alliance between the Franks and Lombards, and before long a war broke out in which national rivalries were embittered by private wrongs. Meantime, after about three years of kingship, Carloman died. His wife fled with her

* Some of the modern Roman writers, anxious to rescue the character of "St. Charlemagne" from the charge of bigamy, maintain that Himiltrude was not his wife, only his mistress. One suggests that Himiltrude may have died before his marriage to Desiderata. The history of his subsequent domestic life has left most historians no hesitation in supposing that Himiltrude was repudiated to make way for Desiderata.

two infant children, and some of the chief persons of her court, to take refuge with King Didier—"a very useless precaution," Charles declared, when he heard of it. No one attempted to make any claim on behalf of the children of Carloman; we can hardly say that they possessed any claim. Charles succeeded with universal assent to the sole sovereignty of the Franks.

CHAPTER XV.

THE CONQUEST OF THE LOMBARD KINGDOM.

Charles's military resources—Mode of warfare—Intrigues at the court of Pavia—Charles invades Lombardy—Dispersion of the Lombard forces—Siege of Pavia—Romance description of Charles—He spends Easter at Rome—Pavia surrenders—Charles is crowned King of the Lombards—Greco-Italian conspiracy—Campaign against Beneventum—Submission of the duke—Invasion of Bavaria—Surrender of the duke—Incorporation of Bavaria into the Frank kingdom—Revolt of Duke of Beneventum—Campaign against him—Conquest of Liburnia from the Greeks.

To the conquests of the earlier Merovingian kings the mayors of the palace had added nothing. They were incessantly at war, but their wars were either civil wars between the great divisions of the kingdom, or defensive wars against the Frisians and Saxons in the north and the Saracens in the south, or they were wars against the dependent states—Aquitaine on the west, Bavaria on the east—which embraced every opportunity to endeavour to regain their national independence. With the reign of Charlemagne we enter upon a new series of wars of

conquest, which last throughout his long reign, and which extend the boundaries of the empire on every side, where they had not already reached the impassable frontier of the sea.

We early recognize the advantages which enabled him to pursue this great career. On the death of Carloman, he wielded the undivided power of the Frankish kingdom unembarrassed by any internal dissensions. He systematically adopted the Imperial policy of employing the military strength of a conquered territory in further conquests. He possessed skill as an administrator, which made the best of the vast resources in his power; his military genius made him the great captain of his age; and his immense physical and mental energy enabled him to rush from side to side of Europe, and bring his personal authority and genius to bear upon several great transactions at the same time. The conquest of Italy and the conquest of Saxony are going on side by side, while he is improving the organization and carrying on the whole administration of a heterogeneous empire, and he finds time to bestow a thoughtful care on the affairs of the Church, and to undertake the revival of learning.

War was not an exceptional incident in the reign of Charles, and an interruption of the life of the times; it was accepted as the normal condition of things. The Frank freemen did not condescend to any kind of labour; they were warriors and nothing else, and mustered round their leader's banner and went out to their summer campaign as regularly as the serfs

on their farms sowed and reaped their scanty harvests. This desultory mode of warfare, which dragged out the great wars of the period to so great a length, is very clearly seen in the annals of Charles's reign attributed to Eginhard. The record of nearly every year begins with some such phrase as "On the first breath of spring," or "At the end of spring, towards the beginning of summer," or "As soon as the season appeared favourable;" the meaning of these phrases being explained in the record of the year A.D. 782, "At the beginning of summer, when the abundance of forage allowed the army to take the field," and again in that of the year A.D. 798, "The spring had come, but the want of forage prevented the army from quitting its winter quarters." So that in the rude campaigning of those days the army could not move till there was herbage enough for the horses and draught oxen, and it had to return to quarters before the herbage failed, and the winter rains flooded the rivers and marshes and made the country impassable.

When the spring was come, the king always held the great assembly of the nation "with the accustomed solemnities." It was not only a political assembly, to which great questions of national interest were submitted: it was the muster of the fighting men, who marched straight from the Champ de Mai to the summer campaign. When winter approached the army retired, was broken up, and the levies returned to their own homes. The king went to one or other of his country places—to

Heristal, or Douzy (near Sedan), or Quierzy; or to one of his towns—to Worms or Aix. A council of the bishops and nobles and counsellors was held in the autumn; and we are always told "the king celebrated the feast of the nativity of the Lord and the solemnities of Pentecost" in *cour plenière*, with royal splendour, and with the quaint ancestral customs, some of which have lingered even to our own day.

We shall best consult the convenience of the reader by disentangling the principal threads of this complex history, and presenting each series of transactions in a connected narrative.

Our attention must first be given to the affairs of Italy. The cordial alliance and understanding which the queen-mother Bertrada had tried to bring about between the Frank and Lombard kingdoms had failed. The policy of Charlemagne, as the patrician and protector of the Roman state and the papal possessions of the exarchate and Pentapolis, and the natural desire of Desiderius to extend the Lombard sovereignty over the whole of Italy, put them into an attitude of political antagonism; and Charlemagne's repudiation of Desiderata had added the bitterness of personal wrong and insult to the antagonism of political rivalry. The court of Pavia had become the focus of all the hatreds against the Frank. The widow and children of Carloman had fled thither, and the claims of the two children to their father's inheritance were at once set up by the Lombard king as a means of attack upon Charlemagne. Hunald, the ex-Duke of Aquitaine, had

quitted his Roman cloister and taken refuge at the court of Pavia, whence he sought to fan the discontent of the Aquitainians. Desiderius was in communication with Tassilo, the Duke of Bavaria, who was always seeking to free his hereditary duchy from its dependence. On the other hand, the Lombard king was assailing the Roman states with secret intrigue and open menace. He requested the Pope Adrian I. to give prestige to the pretensions of the infant sons of Carloman by solemnly consecrating them as kings of the Franks. When the pope declined, he seized some of the towns of the exarchate; and when the pope still refused to lend himself to the furtherance of the plans of Desiderius, the Lombard king marched on Rome. The Romans appealed to Charles for succour. Charles sent an embassy to Desiderius to negotiate an accommodation between him and the Roman states; but at the same time, foreseeing the probable failure of the negotiations, he collected his troops and marched them towards the Alps.

The summer had been spent in these preliminaries, but Charles did not hesitate to undertake a winter campaign. He divided his forces into two armies. One, under his immediate command, descended into Savoy by the pass of Mont Cenis, the route by which he had accompanied his father's Italian expedition eighteen years before; the other, under the command of his uncle, the Count Bernard, a natural son of Charles Martel, took the route of the Great St. Bernard.

The Lombard expected the invader by the road which had been the great high-road of Gallic invasion from the time of Constantine, and had gathered his forces about Susa, which commanded the *embouchure* of the pass. Charles found his way thus strongly barred, and instead of attacking the barrier he pretended to negotiate. Meantime Bernard had crossed the Alps without hindrance, and marched along the southern slopes in the direction of Susa. The Lombards saw themselves in danger of being taken between the two armies, and without risking a battle, broke up, the several contingents of their army retreating at once each to its own territory. The king retreated with all the force he could muster upon Pavia, and prepared to stand a siege.

The monk of St. Gall, to whom we are indebted for so many anecdotes of the reign of Charles, tells us one of the present crisis :—

"On the approach of the French armies towards Pavia, the King Desiderius and the Frank Duke Otker, who had fled to his court with the widow and sons of Carloman, ascended a lofty tower, from which their view extended over all the plain. First came the engines of war, which Darius and Cæsar would have envied. Desiderius demanded of Otker, 'Is Charles in this great crowd?' 'Not yet,' the duke replied. Seeing next the armed militia assembled from all parts of the French Empire, the Lombard said, 'Without doubt Charles marches triumphing in the midst of these masses.' 'No, not

yet,' was the reply. The king, much moved, murmured, 'What can we do if he comes with forces still more numerous than these?' 'You will only know what Charles is when you see him,' said Otker. 'What will happen to us then?' 'I do not know.' While they exchanged these remarks the royal guard, which marched everywhere with Charles, came in sight. Desiderius was amazed. 'At last here is Charles,' he said. 'Not yet,' was still the reply. Next defiled before them a brilliant troop of bishops and abbots, the clerks of the chapel royal; then the counts. Desiderius could no longer endure to gaze; struck with fear, he said, 'Let us descend and hide ourselves in the bowels of the earth, far from the presence and the anger of so terrible a foe.' Otker, trembling also—he who knew well the power of the redoubtable Charles, and who had lived at his court in better times—said, 'When you see the plain bristling with lances as with a harvest, when the darkened waves of the Po and Ticino, reflecting nothing but arms and armour, have thrown round the ramparts new floods of armed men, then you may know that Charles is near.' He had hardly uttered these words, when suddenly the setting sun was hid behind a veil of dark clouds; one would have said that a hurricane unchained by Boreas obscured the light of the sun. As the king advanced, the glare of the swords cast upon the city a light more sinister than night itself. Charles came into sight, a giant of iron. On his head a casque of iron, gauntlets of iron

on his hands, his breast and shoulders clad in a cuirass of iron, his left hand brandished a lance of iron, while his right hand was laid on the iron hilt of his invincible sword. His horse even had the colour and the strength of iron; everywhere the sun's rays were reflected back from iron. From the city rose a confused clamour: 'Everywhere iron! Alas! everywhere iron!' 'King,' cried Otker, 'behold him whom you have been so long looking for;' and as he said these words he fell down insensible." The passage is too famous to be omitted, and is sufficiently expressive of the popular ideas of the vastness of the military resources of the King of the Franks, and of the terror of his personal appearance, to be well worth repeating. But it is hardly necessary to say that the details are due to the vivid imagination of the anecdotist, of whom Chateaubriand says that "the monk of St. Gall is the father of the fabulous element relating to Charles."

The city was too strong to be taken by assault; Charles proceeded to reduce it by a blockade. According to the monk of St. Gall, on the very first day that he sat down before the place, he said to the chiefs of his army, "Let us begin by doing something memorable, that they may not accuse us of passing the day in idleness. Let us make haste and construct here an oratory, so that if they do not soon open the gates to us, we may at least be able to assist at the Divine service." Men were at once set to work, and within a week a basilica

had been built, with its walls, roofs, and painted ceilings, such as one would have said it would have taken a year to build. At the same time, Charles sent for his wife Hildegarde and his two infant children to join him.

When the Lombard army fled from Susa, Adelgis, the king's son, retreated on Verona, carrying with him the widow and the two children of Carloman. Charles detached part of his forces to operate against this city. On their approach Adelgis fled, and made good his escape to Pisa, whence he embarked for Constantinople. Verona surrendered. Gerberge and her children fell into the hands of the conqueror, and appear no more in the page of history. Very possibly the cloister, the refuge of the dethroned princes of the period, received them into its friendly shelter.

The blockade of Pavia had lasted six months without adventure. The feast of Easter approached. Charles resolved to celebrate it in Rome. Taking with him an *entourage* of nobles and ecclesiastics, and an escort of cavalry, he traversed the plains of Tuscany by forced marches, and on Holy Saturday he approached the Vatican gate. The Romans, advised of his approach, met him with every demonstration of honour. An escort met him at Novi, thirty miles from the city. All the corporations of the city came out in procession to meet him, bearing palms and singing hymns. The clergy followed them, bearing the standard of the cross. When he met them, the emperor and his

train dismounted and entered the city on foot. The pope, surrounded by the magnates of the city and the clergy, received him at the entrance to the basilica of St. Peter. The king and the pope exchanged the kiss of peace, and entered hand in hand into the basilica, the clergy singing, "*Benedictus qui venit in nomine Domini.*" After worshipping before the confession of St. Peter, the procession resumed its way through the city to the Lateran, where the king and pope lodged in the palace, which Constantine had given as the habitation of the see.

Soon after the return of Charles to Pavia, the inhabitants of the city refused any longer to endure the miseries of the siege. Hunald, the ex-Duke of Aquitaine, was killed in a popular tumult. The people opened negotiations with Charles, who granted generous conditions of surrender. They opened their gates to the conqueror, and delivered Desiderius and his family into his hands. He sent them into France, where they passed the remainder of their life in the cloister; and Charles assumed the title and duties of King of the Lombards (A.D. 774).

It is desirable to call special attention to the nature of this political revolution. In the case of all former conquests, the Franks had either incorporated the conquered people, or they had been content to reduce them to a condition of dependence under their hereditary chiefs. In this case Charles left to the kingdom of the Lombards its

own nationality and its separate autonomy; only as the head of its national organization and government he had himself crowned with the iron crown at Monza, as the successor of Desiderius.

The Duke of Beneventum, in his distant dukedom (corresponding with the kingdom of Naples), assumed an attitude of independence, and (being the son-in-law of Desiderius) affected to represent the Lombard royalty, and became the rallying-point of the Lombard dissatisfaction with the Frank sovereignty.

It may be that the insurrection of the Saxons, of which we shall have to speak in another chapter, prevented the immediate prosecution of the measures which might have consolidated Charles's sovereignty over the whole, at least, of Northern Italy.

The fugitive prince Adelgis was welcomed at the court of Constantinople, always ready to intrigue for the recovery of its lost Italian possessions. The Emperor Leo bestowed upon him the name of Theodotus, and the titles of Patrician and King, and promised to aid him with a fleet in the recovery of his father's kingdom. At the same time a league was entered into by the Lombard dukes of Beneventum, of Clusium, of Spoleto, and of Friuli, to expel the Frank from Italy. What is especially curious is that Leo, the Archbishop of Ravenna, joined the league. The Bishop of Rome had made him the agent of his rule in the exarchate; he assumed to exercise an independent rule, pretending that Charles had committed the tem-

poral rule of the exarchate of Ravenna to its archbishop, in the same way that he had committed the temporal rule of the Roman duchy to the pope.

Rabigaud, Duke of Friuli, anticipated the plans of the Lombard league by declaring himself sovereign, and independent of the Frank king. Again the energy of the great monarch made itself felt. On the conclusion of the Saxon campaign, he marched with a body of chosen troops southward, halted to celebrate Christmas at Schelestadt, in Alsace, and resumed his march. Before Easter Rabigaud had been defeated, and had paid for his treason with his head; Treviso, held by his father-in-law, the Duke Stablinus, had been besieged and taken; and the revolt entirely crushed. The king, leaving to the Lombard dukes their titles and authority, took the precaution to divide the northern duchies into cantons, in each of which he placed a Frank count, who might form a check against similar designs in the future. The ambitious Archbishop of Ravenna died in the following year, and his plans of independence died with him.

On the submission of Witikind and the conclusion of the Saxon war, Charles was at liberty to give his attention again to the affairs of Italy, and he proceeded to complete and consolidate his conquests there. In the autumn of A.D. 786 he crossed the Alps, kept the Christmas festival at Florence, and marched on to Rome; thence he entered upon the territory of the duchy of Beneventum, and marched through it without opposi-

tion to Capua. The duke, unable to resist the forces which Charles brought against him, sent his eldest son Romuald, with other ambassadors, to treat with him. But the terms which they were empowered to accept were not those which Charles had determined to enforce. He detained Romuald at his camp while he sent his own ambassadors to dictate conditions. He demanded that the duke should recognize the direct and immediate sovereignty of the king, should pay an annual tribute, and should give sureties for his future loyalty; and, among other things, that he should restore to the Bishop of Rome the estates of the see situated within the limits of the duchy, whose revenues the duke had seized. If these conditions were refused Charles threatened to treat the duchy as a conquered country, and the duke as a rebellious vassal. The duke had fled to the port of Salerno, ready to follow his brother-in-law Adelgis to Constantinople. He accepted the conditions, which left him still duke. And Charles returned to Rome, where he celebrated the festival of Easter (A.D. 787).

The affairs of Bavaria were connected with those of Italy. Bavaria was the only one of the German conquests of the Frank community which had been left till now to enjoy its autonomy under its hereditary dukes. The national pride of the Bavarians was hurt by its dependence, and the Duke Tassilo had always aimed at breaking the yoke off his neck. This feeling made Bavaria incline towards

the enemies of the Frank monarchy. Tassilo had cemented his friendship with the Lombard kingdom by marriage with the daughter of Desiderius. He had been engaged in all the intrigues of the Lombard question. When Charles had marched against Beneventum, it happened that Tassilo had entered into hostilities with a Frank count of the Tyrol, on a dispute as to their respective boundaries.

When Charles returned to Rome at Easter, envoys from Tassilo met him there; but their explanations were not satisfactory, and Charles summoned the vassal duke to appear before him at the Champ de Mai (A.D. 787) at Worms; and when he did not appear, the king resolved to put an end to the intrigues of Bavaria by incorporating it into the Frank kingdom.

Troops poured from all sides upon the rebel duchy. Pepin led an army from Italy by the valley of the Adige against its southern frontier. A second army of Thuringians and Saxons marched upon it from the north. Charles himself, at the head of the levies of Neustria, Burgundy, and Aquitaine, gathering the levies of Alemannia as he advanced, marched upon Augsburg, the key of the eastern frontier.

Tassilo, on his side, had resolved to strike a great blow for independence, and had entered into relations with the Huns and Slavs. They failed him at the crisis. Tassilo surrendered to Charles at his camp at Augsburg; was tried at the Champ de Mai, at Ingelheim, of the following year, 788,

and condemned for high treason. Charles spared his life, but deposed him and his family, one of the oldest of the German dynasties, and condemned them, the Duke Tassilo, his duchess Lindberga the daughter of Desiderius, and their eleven children, to the cloister.

Thus the last of the free German peoples was swallowed up into the great Frank monarchy. In the space of two centuries, since Clovis, it had conquered, denationalized, absorbed all the peoples of the great Teutonic family—the Alemanni, Burgundians, Thuringians, Visigoths of Aquitaine, Langobards, Saxons. And now the same fate overtook the barbarians; they were deprived of every vestige of their ancient autonomy; their country was, like all the other Carolingian conquests, divided into counties, and reduced to the rank of an administrative province of the Frank kingdom.

There remains yet a final act in the history of the Lombard conquest.

Duke Arigis, of Beneventum, had accepted the conditions which Charles had offered, only with the resolution to break them, and to reassert his independence at the earliest possible opportunity. He reopened negotiations with the Byzantine court, which readily listened to his proposals; for the progress of the Frank arms threatened the possessions which the Greek empire still retained along the Neapolitan coast and in the Calabrias, dependencies of the Greek patriciate of Sicily. Arigis offered to transfer his allegiance to the Byzantine court, to

assume the Greek costume and manners, and to become a Greek, on condition that the Neapolitan territory should be united with the territory of Beneventum, and that the whole should be placed under his rule, with the dignity of patrician. The Empress Irene agreed to the proposal, and undertook to send Adelgis with a military and naval force to co-operate with his brother-in-law in the hostilities which must ensue.

But when the Greek envoys arrived they found the Duke Arigis dead; his eldest son had already preceded him by a few days; and Grimoald, the younger son, was a hostage in the hands of Charles. The king was warned by the pope of the Greco-Lombard intrigue, and advised not to put Grimoald in a position to assist in carrying out the plans of his family. But Charles had confidence in the prudence and loyalty of the young Lombard prince, who had lived at his court long enough to know the power of the Frank king.

The Greek troops did land under the command of Adelgis and of John the treasurer, and when Grimoald refused to join them they invaded his territory. But Charles had also raised troops in Northern Italy, which he put under the orders of one of his captains. In a long-contested engagement the Greeks were defeated; Adelgis and John were among the slain, and this victory crushed at once the endeavour to re-establish the Lombard kingdom, and the last endeavour of the Greek empire to recover its lost Italian possessions.

Charles pushed his advantages against the empire. Already master of Istria, on the eastern shore of the Adriatic, King Pepin shortly after (A.D. 788) wrested Liburnia from the Greeks, and added it to the Frank-Italian kingdom. It was a valuable acquisition on the flank of the barbarian races beyond the Danube, with whom the Frank empire was destined before long to come into collision.

CHAPTER XVI.

THE SAXON WAR.

Description of Saxony—Campaign of A.D. 772—Destruction of the Irminsul—Revolt of 774, and subsequent campaign—Revolt of 776, and campaign—The Champ de Mai held at Paderborn—Witikind's raid into Francia, 778—Revolt of 782—Defeat of Frank troops—Massacre of the revolters—The great rebellion of 783—The Saxons fight two pitched battles and are defeated—Charles completes their subjugation in a winter campaign—Severe laws—Submission and baptism of Witikind.

All along the eastern frontier of the Frank dominions lay the Saxons; a numerous people spread over a vast territory, retaining still in the eighth century the rude freedom, the barbarous manners, the idolatrous religion, and the predatory habits of their ancestors. The Roman civilization had never touched them; the Roman armies had penetrated their forests and marshes, only to leave behind, in the bones of the legions of Varus, a monument to Arminius and the spirit of German liberty. No great natural boundary separated the Frank dominions from the country of the Saxons; the frontier line ran for the most part through a

plain and open country; only here and there had nature placed a range of mountains or a great forest to keep the hostile races apart. The result was that the civilized Frank kingdom suffered from the predatory incursions of the barbarians, just as the empire used to do from those of the Franks; and the marches of the two countries were the scene of continual outrage and violence.

Charles did not commence war with the Saxons, for a state of war between the two peoples had existed for centuries. What Charles did was no longer to content himself with a war of defence and reprisals, but to undertake to put an end to these ceaseless hostilities by a war of conquest. It was the longest, the most bloody, and the most difficult of all his wars. It was carried on in seventeen campaigns, which extended over three and thirty years, with equal loss on one side and on the other. But its success was perhaps the most valuable of all Charles's achievements, since it permanently rolled back the pressure of the flood of barbarism and heathenism from the civilized and Christian portion of Western Europe, and carried forward civilization and Christianity into the heart of Eastern Europe as far as the Elbe.

We need not give a detailed history of the Saxon war; it will be enough for our purpose to sketch its outline and to note some of its more important features. The first year's campaign (A.D. 772) offers some points of special interest. Charles convoked the Champ de Mai at Worms,

crossed the Rhine with his musters near Mayence, and by rapid marches struck across the Saxon territory to the basin of the Weser, aiming at the very heart of its national and religious life. He took the fortified position of Eresburg by assault, and penetrated to the great religious sanctuary in which stood the Irminsul, "the pillar of the world." This Irminsul was a great pillar; before it stood an altar on which half the captives taken in war were sacrificed to Woden; and around it were stored heaps of treasure, the accumulated share of the spoils of war offered to the god. The army spent three days here, sharing the booty and destroying the idol. It was the height of summer; the springs and streams did not supply sufficient water, and the men were suffering from thirst, when at midday, while every one was sleeping, according to custom,* the dry bed of a torrent which came down from the neighbouring mountain was suddenly filled with water sufficient for the wants of all the army, who naturally hailed the remarkable occurrence as a Divine interposition on behalf of the destroyers of the great Saxon idol and sanctuary. It was, in all likelihood, the intermittent fountain of the Bullerhorn, which gave this seasonable supply in a manner which might well appear miraculous. Marching still forward, the king was met on the banks of the Weser by Saxon deputies, who sought peace. He gave them peace on easy conditions; one of which

* We find elsewhere, also, notices of this custom among the Franks of sleeping in the middle of the day.

was that the Saxons should allow the Christian missionaries to preach among them without molestation, another that they should give twelve hostages, whom Charles sent to monasteries in France to be educated in the Christian faith. He returned to his own dominions, to pass the winter at Thionville. But it was then that the news reached him from Italy which led the king to reassemble troops and undertake a winter campaign in Italy, of which we have already spoken.

The Saxons had no central government with which the Frank king could deal. They were divided into three great confederations—the tribes of the western district, or Westphalians, those of the eastern district, the Ostphalians, and those of the central district, Angarians—and each confederation was only a loose alliance of independent tribes. The Frank historians accuse the Saxons of violating all their treaties; but the fact would seem to be that the treaty forced upon one portion of the tribes was not recognized as binding upon the whole; and even treaties to which a more general assent had been extorted by force were not much respected by a race fiercely tenacious of independence, when an opportunity for revolt presented itself. The constant successes of Charles seem to have been so destitute of result because the Saxons usually declined anything like a general engagement, so that their force could not be broken by two or three great blows; they had no great towns whose possession might enable the conqueror

to dominate the country. The summer campaign was little more than a raid, now in one, now in another part of the wide Saxon territory. The Franks could do little more than burn the cabins, and destroy the scanty crops; their greatest success would be to seize the cattle, their chief riches. They found chiefly the old men and women and children. It was these, probably, who made the treaties, and submitted to baptism, and gave the hostages. But the fighting men retreated before them; when driven to their utmost boundary, they only had to retire into Denmark until the enemy had withdrawn. Witikind was the hero of the Saxon defence, conducted according to these Fabian tactics.

In 774, the Saxons having taken advantage of Charles's absence in Italy to break into the Frank territory and harry the country of the Hessians with fire and sword, Charles took the field against them in the following spring, "with the determination not to lay down his arms till he had compelled them to embrace the Christian religion or had exterminated them." Priests and monks followed his victorious armies; the conquered were invited to receive baptism; churches were built and monasteries founded. The policy of Charles became not merely to conquer the Saxons by the sword, but to conquer them morally by civilization and Christianity.

In 776, the Saxons again broke out into a general revolt. While they were besieging the fortified places which Charles had erected and garrisoned

in their country, Charles himself had time, by one of his rapid marches, to arrive from Lombardy and bring up troops. The fighting Saxon men seem to have retreated or dispersed before him; he ravaged the country as far as the sources of the Lippe, where the elders of the people again met him, with offers to submit to his rule and to receive the Christian faith. An immense crowd of Saxons, men, women, and children, were baptized in the river, in presence of the conquering troops, at the hands of the ecclesiastics who had accompanied them. In the following spring Charles summoned the Champ de Mai to meet on the borders of the Lippe, at Paderborn, and the Saxons were admitted to it on equal terms with the other constituent peoples of the Frank monarchy. Again a great number of Saxons received baptism, and one might have thought that they had definitively reconciled themselves to the progress of civilization and Christianity, and to incorporation into the great monarchy of the West. But, the chronicler notes, Witikind, the bold and enterprising patriot who had instigated the late revolt, was absent; he had sought refuge with a band of his most trusty companions in the Danish territory, where he inflamed the minds of the Scandinavian peoples against the aggressive Frank, and waited his opportunity.

The opportunity came two years after, when Charles was engaged in war against the Moors of Spain, and the rumour of his defeat at Roncevaux had tarnished the prestige of his arms, and

given new hopes to his enemies. In the spring of 778, Witikind returned from the north; his band of refugees was re-enforced by Norman warriors, and many of the Saxon youth joined his standard. There was no general rising of the Saxons, and Witikind did not attempt, by any regular operations, to drive out the Frank garrisons and restore the country to freedom; he waged a war of revenge. Breaking into the Frank territory, he ravaged the open country up to the bank of the Rhine, sparing neither age nor sex, burning and destroying everything—farm and grange, church and monastery—in a manner which showed that plunder was not his object so much as revenge. Charles immediately sent the nearest troops against them; but without waiting their approach, the Saxon bands retreated through the Hessian country, putting everything to fire and sword as they retired. The monks of Fulda hastily retreated at their approach, carrying with them as their chief treasure the shrine containing the body of Boniface, their founder. But the Frank troops came up in time to save Fulda from destruction. They overtook the retreating marauders on the banks of the Adern, a confluent of the Weser, and carried on a flying engagement with them till Witikind at last reached the shelter of his forests, leaving the greater portion of his partisans behind him on the field. Next spring, Charles in person took the field with numerous troops. Witikind had assembled all the force he could muster on the

north of the Lippe, and endeavoured to arrest the march of the Frank army. But suffering a defeat here, the Saxons at once disbanded, and Witikind again retreated beyond the Danish frontier; and the country renewed its submission and its oaths of fidelity.

Again, in the following spring, Charles held the Champ de Mai at the source of the Lippe. Many received baptism, not only Saxons, but Frisians and Slavs; and the king proceeded to divide the Saxon territory into bishoprics, and to found abbeys, and to appoint counts to the civil administration of the country. We anticipate a little by stating here, that within the space of twenty years (780–802), the modest timber churches of the first missionaries had given place to the cathedral churches of eight powerful sees, round each of which had grown up towns which were the centres of the population, wealth, and political power of the country through all the Middle Ages: Minden, Halberstadt, Verden, Bremen, Munster, Hildesheim, Osnabrück, Paderborn.

After two years of peace, Charles again held the Champ de Mai at the source of the Lippe, in 782; and regulated more completely the civil organization of the Saxon territory on the same principle as that of the Franks, giving the actual administration chiefly into the hands of the principal Saxon families themselves. But hardly had he returned into Austrasia, than Witikind again gave the signal for an outbreak of hostilities. In the region be-

tween the Ems and the Elbe, the churches were burnt, the Christians scattered, the missionaries slain who had not found safety in flight before the soldiers actually appeared in the field. Some rashness on the part of the Frank troops first sent to check the rising gave Witikind a victory at Sunthal, which forms a pendant in the north to the recent disaster at Roncevaux in the south. Charles himself speedily appeared on the field by forced marches, at the head of a great force; but the rebels were already dispersed, Witikind again across the Danish frontier, and the king found nothing but submissive subjects.

But the anger of the king was roused by the disaster which had befallen his arms, and he was resolved upon the infliction of a terrible chastisement. He summoned a meeting of the Saxon administrators at Verden, in the midst of the country which the insurgents had filled with fire and bloodshed, accused them of complicity with the rebels, or of culpable negligence in not having taken proper measures against them; and he demanded that they should deliver to him those who had been active in the recent outrages, as the only way of averting signal punishment from the whole people. Those who were compromised were seized in their homes, or hunted down in the woods in which they had sought refuge, and delivered over to the Franks, to the number of 4500 men. Charles condemned them all to death, and in one day they were beheaded, every one. "After which," the

annalist * calmly relates, "the king returned to winter at Thionville, and there celebrated, according to custom, the festivals of Christmas and Easter."

The horrible massacre, instead of filling the Saxons with terror, inspired them with rage. The whole country broke out into insurrection, and hailed Witikind as the common leader. He came, bringing with him Norman allies; and the Frisians at the same time broke into insurrection, slew the Christians and burnt the churches, and made common cause with their co-religionists in a great endeavour to break the yoke of the Frank dominion and the Christian religion from off their necks.

In the spring of 783, while Charles was making his preparations for a great campaign, Hildegarde, his queen, died at Thionville. But, after paying her the last honours, he at once crossed the Rhine with the advanced guard, leaving the main body of his troops to follow. Witikind had gathered all his forces into a strong position on the heights of the Osneggberge, and there awaited the attack. It was the first time that the Saxons had ventured to sustain the attack of the Frank armies. They fought bravely, but were at length obliged to yield the passage of the mountains, which they did in good order, and without being pursued. A second engagement took place on the bank of the little river Hase, in the country of Osnabrück, in which the Saxons were defeated and retired in disorder, and

* Pseudo-Eginhard, sub. an. 784.

Charles ravaged the country as far as the Elbe with fire and sword. Retiring into winter quarters, he returned again the following spring. He met with no opposition, but also with no submission; the Saxons endured the calamities which they could not resist with a stern resignation, and as soon as he had turned his back they began to reassemble in arms. Charles at once returned upon his steps, took up his quarters at Eresberg, and sent for his new wife, Fastrada,* and his children, and for the first time since the siege of Pavia he passed the winter in camp. He organized a winter campaign to harass the Saxons and reduce them to submission. When spring came he again held the Champ de Mai at Paderborn. He brought an irresistible force into the country. He issued an edict of Draconian severity. It denounced the penalty of death against the refusal of baptism; against burning the bodies of the dead, after the pagan custom; against eating flesh in Lent, if this were done in contempt of Christianity; against setting fire to churches, or violently entering them, or robbing them; against the murder of bishops, priests, or deacons; against the offering of human sacrifices, and against certain barbaric superstitions. And he specially provided that in these cases the substitution of a fine for the capital penalty, which formed a feature of all the Teutonic codes, should not be allowed. Parents neglecting to have their children baptized within

* He had married her within a few months of the death of Hildegarde.

a year of their birth were punishable by a fine. Those who continued to sacrifice in the groves, or to do any other act of pagan worship, were to be fined. Thus the king endeavoured to compel the people to forsake their barbarous customs, and to embrace Christianity, as the only means of effectually taming their wild spirits.

Charles took another important step towards the attainment of his objects by opening negotiations with Witikind.

Generous offers on the part of Charlemagne met with a generous response in the heart of the less fortunate warrior. He consented to abandon resistance and to embrace Christianity. Charles himself took the office of godfather—a spiritual relationship which, according to the sentiment of the times, bound men in the most sacred bonds. What at length subdued the brave soul of the patriot who for twelve years had kept alive the war of independence against all the power of the most powerful king of the age, we are not told; perhaps he saw that the cause of national independence was hopeless, and that patriotism itself demanded frank submission; posterity has recognized that his conduct was as heroic in his submission and conversion as in his long and desperate resistance; and the name of Witikind was one of the most popular in the legends of the Middle Ages, and lived on the tongues of the people, together with that of Charlemagne himself.

Thus in the space of twenty years Charles had

completed the political organization of Western Christendom. He had united under his sceptre the bulk of the Teutonic and of the Latin races. He impressed upon this Western Christendom a certain uniformity of institutions, and a spirit of community of interests, which long survived the territorial division of the great empire, which speedily ensued.

Outside the Frank monarchy were left the Saxon tribes between the mouth of the Elbe and the Baltic, and the kindred peoples of the Danish and Scandinavian peninsulas. Beyond the frontier lines of the Upper Elbe and the Danube lay vast scattered tribes of Tartar and Slav race, heathen and barbarian, stretching into the unknown countries northward and eastward, whence Attila and his hordes had issued, and whither they had retired with the plunder of the Roman world.

CHAPTER XVII.

THE SPANISH CONQUEST.

Saracen envoys seek the assistance of Charles and offer him their allegiance—He marches into Spain—Doubtful successes—Retires to Aquitaine—Defeat of his rearguard at Roncevaux—Organization of the kingdoms of Aquitaine and Italy—Alliance with Irene.

At the Champ de Mai at Paderborn, in the spring of A.D. 777, amidst the dukes and counts, the bishops and abbots, and the freemen of all the various races, Teutonic and Latin, which assembled at the summons of Charles, there appeared some Moorish envoys from beyond the Pyrenees who had come to offer homage and to seek aid from the great Frank king.

The emirs of the north of Spain were seeking to free themselves from the rule of the caliph at Cordova. Seventeen years before, Soliman-Ibn-el-Arabi, the Vali of Barcelona, had declared his independence of the caliph, and put himself under the protection of Pepin. It was the same person—now Vali of Saragossa—who again came, accom-

panied by the Valis of Pampeluna and other neighbouring towns, to put the Spanish frontier under the protection of Charles; seeking to play off the Frank king against the Mussulman caliph, and to maintain their own independence between the two. Charles listened to their proposals, and concluded a treaty with them, which had the effect of extending the boundaries of the Frank empire beyond the Pyrenees as far as the line of the Ebro. During the ensuing months he organized a great force, drawn from all parts of his dominions, to go and take possession of this new conquest. He himself, with his family, took up his quarters at the villa of Cassinogilum (Chasseneuil), at the confluence of the Lot and the Garonne, while his contingents from the borders of the Danube, and the shores of the German Ocean, and the plains of Upper Italy, were converging to their rendezvous in Aquitaine. It was here that Hildegarde, the queen, gave birth to twin sons—Lothaire, who died in his cradle, and Clovis, who was destined one day to be his father's heir. Charles divided his forces into two armies; with one he himself entered into the peninsula through the gorges of the country of the Vascons, the other at the same time crossed the mountain range at its eastern extremity. Neither army encountered any obstacle. Charles received the surrender of Pampeluna and neighbouring cities, Barcelona and Girone opened their gates to the Catalonian army, and the invading forces effected a junction under the walls of Saragossa.

We have no detailed account of what took place; but it is easy to see that they who had invited the intervention of the Frank king soon repented of their imprudence. Charles had not come to serve the interests of these disaffected Mussulmans; he had taken the opportunity which they gave him to increase the security of his own empire, by getting the Spanish march into his own possession. It would seem that a coolness sprang up between Charles and his Moorish allies. Soliman would not admit the Franks into his city of Saragossa. The neighbouring Christian kings of Navarre and the Asturias applied to the Caliph of Cordova for aid against the Franks. The Vascons must have shown some open hostility, since Charles, on his return, dismantled Pampeluna, the capital of their country.

At the end of a few weeks only this vast force returned, without having effected anything which seems worthy of so great a display of military power. The hostility of his principal Moorish ally; the absence of subsistence for so large a force in a thinly inhabited mountainous district; the difficulty of transporting supplies across the mountain chain which separated him from his own resources;—these considerations may, perhaps, explain the speedy return.

The two armies united for the retreat through the west of the Pyrenees, taking the ancient Roman road from Astorga to Bourdeaux, through the gorge of Roncevaux. The main body of the army, under the immediate command of the king,

traversed the mountains without encumbrance, leaving a strong rear-guard to follow with the baggage.

But when Charles had safely deployed his troops upon the plain of Aquitaine, he waited in vain for the arrival of his rear-guard. A catastrophe, of which the general rumour soon spread abroad, and of which the details were never known, had swallowed up the whole body, to the last man of them, in the gorges of the mountains. Eginhard briefly sums up the story. "The Gascons," he says, "had placed themselves in ambush on the crest of the mountain, which, by the extent and density of its woods, concealed their ambuscades. They threw themselves upon the rear of the column, hurled it back into the depth of the valley, slew all the men to the very last, pillaged the baggage, and favoured by the shadows of night, which already darkened, scattered on all sides with amazing rapidity, and without a possibility of following upon their traces. The assailants had had in this engagement lighter arms and the advantage of position. The weight of their equipment, and the difficulty of the ground on the other hand, put the Franks entirely at a disadvantage. There perished, among others, Eggihard, the seneschal of the king; Anselm, count of the palace; and Roland, governor of the March of Brittany."

The frightful catastrophe, the horror and mystery and pity of it, seized upon the popular mind. The imagination of some mediæval poet supplied the

details of the tragical combat of heroes; and the 'Chanson de Roland' became one of the most popular of the series of legendary stories which surround with a halo of romance the real history of the greatest hero of the Middle Ages.

Charles had begun to discover, that which Diocletian had discovered five centuries before, that a vast empire, combining populations of different character, needs more than one centre of administration. The population of Aquitaine had remained more Latin than the France beyond the Loire, had retained its autonomy until recently, and its interests would be best served by a separate administration. Italy could not advantageously be administered from the Rhine. The king resolved to form Italy into one kingdom; and the south-west of France, from the Loire to the Ebro, into another; each with its central government, and its hierarchy of officials. As the representative of his own authority, he nominated the baby Louis, at three years old, who by accident had been born on Aquitanian soil, as King of Aquitaine, with the centre of his government at Orleans. His elder brother Pepin, of five years of age, he nominated King of Lombardy, with his court at Pavia. A nearly contemporary chronicler tells us that the little King of Aquitaine was taken by his governor, Arnold, to Orleans; a suit of arms, proportioned to his little limbs, was made for him; he was placed on horseback, and thus made his

royal entry into the capital of his kingdom.* In the same year (781) the Empress Irene sought the hand of Rothrude, the eldest daughter of Charles, for her son, the young Emperor Constantine VI., Porphyrogenitus, of ten years of age. The king of the Franks consented, the young people were affianced, and one of the officials of the Imperial household was placed in attendance on the Frank princess, to teach her the language of the people among whom she was destined to live.

* "Astronom," quoted in the "Vita Ludovici Pii" by D. Bouquet, vi. 88.

CHAPTER XVIII.

THE CHAPTER OF MISFORTUNES.

The Huns invade the empire, and are defeated—Charles marches against the Huns—The results of the campaign—Conspiracy against Charles—Count Theodoric and his troops massacred by the Saxons—Revolt of Grimoald—The Saracens invade Aquitaine—Defeated by Count William of Toulouse.

THE Saxon wars had been long and costly, but they had accomplished their object. They had not only subjugated these warlike Teutonic tribes, and included them within the Frank kingdom; they had also introduced Christianity and civilization among them, and had practically extended the limits of Christendom to the bank of the Elbe.

But here Teutonic Christendom found itself face to face with other barbarian races and other forms of heathenism; and the struggle began anew.

We saw, at the end of chapter xv., that Tassilo had excited the Huns and Slavs to hostilities against the Franks; the fall of the Duke of Bavaria did not lead these tribes to abandon the designs of war and plunder in which they had been indulging.

At the same time that the war was going on in the territory of Beneventum, which we have spoken of at p. 239, these barbarian parties to the great anti-Frank alliance sent out two armies of invasion; one into the Lombard duchy of Friuli, the other into Bavaria. The first was successfully encountered by the troops of King Pepin, while the second was met and defeated by two of the lieutenants of Charles, the Counts Grahamn and Odoacer. A few weeks after, the Huns returned with augmented forces into Bavaria, and were again defeated with great slaughter, and many of the fugitives, driven into the Danube, perished in its waters.

During three following years, however, Charles was preparing to break the power of these troublesome and dangerous neighbours to his eastern frontiers. In the August of 791 his preparations were completed. He divided his forces into two armies. The Teutonic troops were placed under the command of the Count Theodoric and the Chamberlain Magenfried; Charles himself commanded the levies of Frankish Gaul. The former army marched along the left bank, the latter along the right bank of the Danube; while a vast flotilla carried the impedimenta of the two armies, under a strong escort. On arriving at the point where the river Ens runs into the Danube, the armies halted for three days, and engaged in fastings and prayer for the success of their arms. Then they crossed the rivers, and entered into the enemy's territory.

The Huns had prepared a strong defensive

position on the site of the ancient Roman city of Comagene. But Charles's first attack forced the position. The Huns fled without an attempt to arrest his further progress, and he ravaged the country far and wide. But the unhealthiness of the marshy plains in the autumn season produced a disease among the horses, which killed nine out of ten, and caused great sickness among the troops; and Charles repassed the Ens with as great loss as if he had been retreating from an unsuccessful campaign.

Meantime an Italian-Frank army, under King Pepin, had attacked the central stronghold of the country. Between the Danube and the Theiss was situated a vast entrenched camp, called the Ring, which was the one city and stronghold of the Huns. It was a circular enclosure, forty to fifty miles in circumference. It had nine concentric lines of fortification, composed of earth, stones, and trunks of trees, piled up twenty feet high, with a rude palisade of branches of trees. In the intervals between these lines of fortification were villages, and a little rude cultivation; and the cattle and the whole population could be gathered behind these lines in time of danger. In the middle space within the nine circles was the rude palace of the Chagan, or chief, an immense collection of timber buildings, within which was treasured the accumulated spoils of the Roman provinces which the ancestors of the Huns had ravaged three centuries ago.

Pepin and his troops penetrated the outer forti-

fication, and sacked some of the villages within it. But the brave resistance of the defenders of the second circle, and the arrival of the Huns who had fled before Charles on hearing of the danger of their citadel, compelled Pepin to retreat without further successes.

Probably this serious reverse spread widely among the Frankish peoples a feeling of discontent with these endless wars which brought no booty; this coincided with a discontent which existed among some of the principal persons of the kingdom; the result of these discontents was a palace conspiracy, which had one of the sons of Charlemagne as its centre.

Fastrada appears in the legend as the evil genius of Charles, the Fredegonda of the Carolingian story. Her evil influence, it is said, urged the king to acts of injustice and tyranny, which alienated the affections of his nobles, and brought his rule into ill odour among the people. The popular feeling is shown in the legend which relates that the evil fascination she exercised over the strong mind of the great king was due to the magic spell of a ring which she wore. On her death the ring came into the possession of a bishop, for whom Charles at once conceived such an admiration, that the bishop found the emperor troublesome, and cast the ring into a neighbouring lake; where it still exercised its magic power upon the affections of the king, who would sit for hours by the margin of the lake, gazing upon its waters.

We have already had occasion to say that before Charles divorced Himiltrude, in order to marry Desiderata, he had by her a son named Pepin. This eldest son of Charles had (says Eginhard), a beautiful face, but a deformed body; he was hump-backed. That the stalwart king passed over the unhappy boy, as unqualified for military exploits or for the cares of government, might have been borne with patience, but we gather that Fastrada hated the youth, and drove him to madness by jests upon his deformity.

The prince was made the centre of the discontents of the court. The conspirators were accustomed to assemble by night in the church of St. Peter, at Regensburg. One night a clerk of the church, who had fallen asleep in it, waking, overheard their plans; rushed off to the palace, with difficulty obtained audience of the king, and made him acquainted with the plot. In the morning the conspirators were arrested; some were decapitated, others hanged, others exiled; the prince was tonsured, and sent into a monastery.

> "Misfortunes come not single spies,
> But in battalions."

Treasons, defections, revolts, broke out in all parts of the empire. In the spring of 792, the Count Theodoric, marching with the levies of Northern France towards Bavaria, with a view to a campaign against the Huns, was met on the borders of the Weser by considerable Saxon levies,

who had been summoned to join his banner and march with him to the campaign. But the Saxons surrounded the Franks and attacked them; and the experienced captain, with the greater part of his followers, perished under the weapons of the traitors.

Charles was obliged to suspend his intended operations against the Huns; he was obliged even to postpone the punishment of this act of treason, for Beneventum had broken into revolt, and all his disposable forces were needed to pacify Italy. Grimoald, at first so faithful, had fallen into the traditional policy of his family: had married a princess of the Byzantine imperial family: and, relying on promises of support, had raised the standard of independence. The king at once sent his son Louis, who was with him at Regensburg, to raise the military force of the south, and march to the assistance of his brother, the King of Italy. We have no particulars of the campaign. Grimoald seems to have been left unsupported by his allies, and to have sued for peace, which was granted on easy terms. But, as the Frank army had suffered two years before in Pannonia from pestilence, now it suffered from a great famine, which desolated Italy and Gaul in the early part of the year 793.

Aquitaine, denuded of its forces, was the scene of a new Moorish invasion. A new caliph, Hescham, had healed the dissensions which had so long enfeebled the Moslem power; proclaimed a holy war, led an immense force through the passes of

the Eastern Pyrenees, and debouched upon the plains of Septimania. Happily for the Franks, a hero was at hand worthy of the occasion. Wilhelm, Count of Toulouse, gathered the garrisons and forces of the neighbourhood, and hastened at their head to check the Mussulman advance. The little army took up a position in Villedaigne, at the confluence of the Orbieu and the Aude. They were greatly outnumbered by their assailants; but, encouraged by the heroic example of their leader, they stood their ground; and though the greater part of them fell where they stood, they did not fall till they had made a terrible slaughter of the enemy. Only a handful of the heroic band, with their leader, survived. But the Moors had sustained such a check that their advance was definitely arrested; they retreated with an immense booty. The caliph devoted the share of booty which fell to him to the erection of a mosque at Cordova; and, perhaps in the fulfilment of the letter of some vow to build a mosque on the land of the Christians, he had sacks of earth carried from the battle-field of Villedaigne, on the backs of his Aquitanian captives, to form the foundation of his building. The mosque which Hescham thus built with Christian money, on Christian soil, fell in turn into the hands of the Christians, and is now the cathedral of Cordova.

CHAPTER XIX.

CONCLUSION OF THE WARS OF CONQUEST.

The second period of the Saxon war—Deportation of Saxons—Planting of foreign colonies among them—Second period of the Saracen war—The definitive conquest of the Spanish march—Pepin defeats the Huns, captures the "Ring," and settles the country.

It was not until the year 794, at the conclusion of the Council of Frankfort, that Charles was at leisure to punish the treacherous massacre of Count Theodore and his Franks, of which the Saxons had been guilty years before. In the autumn of that year he entered into Saxony with two armies, one commanded by himself, the other by his son Charles. The Saxons had made some defensive preparations, but found themselves so outnumbered, and probably so out-manœuvred, that they laid down their arms without a blow.

In this and two following years Charles overran the whole country, and subjected it to a rigorous military occupation; but in place of the bloody reprisals in which, ten years before, he had executed

four thousand insurgents, he contented himself now with deporting vast numbers of the Saxons—men, women and children—and settling them in colonies in various parts of the middle and south of Europe. At the same time he planted military colonies in various places in Saxony. A revolt in the extreme north was sternly repressed. In 797, Charles was able to relax the severity of the capitularies he had issued ten years before; and from this time we may regard the Saxon provinces as fully incorporated in the Frank dominions. The dedication of the basilica which he had erected at Paderborn, by the hands of the fugitive Pope Leo III., in the year 799, may make a useful chronological point, and may serve, moreover, to synchronize the affairs of Saxony and of Italy, which our plan has required us to pursue separately.

In the mean time the other great wars of Charles had, under the able conduct of his lieutenants, been drawing towards a prosperous conclusion; viz. the war against the Huns under King Pepin, and the war against the Saracens under King Louis. Of these subjects we must now give a rapid summary.

In the spring of 797 Charles again saw a Saracen envoy at his court at Aix-la-Chapelle. Hescham, Emir of Cordova, had died. There was a disputed succession; the whole politics of Spain were in confusion, and more than one of the contending parties sought the aid of the powerful Frank king. He

embraced the opportunity to strengthen his influence south of the Pyrenees. Charles sent his son Louis, the young King of Aquitaine, to his own states to organize the subsequent movements. The Count William of Toulouse, the hero of Villedaigne, was put in command of the troops of Aquitaine. The Frank forces entered Spain, as on the former occasion, by both ends of the Pyrenees; the cities everywhere surrendered, or an entrance was easily forced. The valiant populations of Gallicia and the Asturias, under the leadership of King Alphonso II., allied themselves with the Frankish forces, and co-operated in driving back the infidel enemy. The success was definitive, and the line of the Ebro became the boundary of the dominions of the great Frank. A year later, the Balearic Islands also, harassed by Saracen pirates, put themselves under the protection of the Frank monarchy.

Among the Huns also dynastic disputes prepared the way for their conquest. At the close of an internal struggle, which had deprived both factions of its leader, and left the divided race helpless against an external foe, Pepin, with his Italian forces, poured into Pannonia from the south-west, drove back the wandering hordes, attacked their central fortification, carried one after another the nine circles of the Ring, and seized the immense booty so long guarded there; and the young king entered into Aix in a kind of triumph with his victorious troops, his captives, and his waggon-loads of booty. The capture of the Ring broke

the strength of the Huns of Pannonia. The war against them lasted, from first to last, six years. Many of the Huns were slain, many retired from the country further eastward; the remainder accepted the religion and the sovereignty of the Frank. Churches and monasteries were planted up and down the country, the garrisons at once of Christianity and civilization.

CHAPTER XX.

CHARLES EMPEROR.

Death of Pope Adrian—Election of Leo III.—Charles's letter to him—Revolt against Leo—He flees to Charles—Is escorted back to Rome—The Norman pirates—Charles visits Rome—Holds inquiry into accusations against the pope—The Christmas of 800 in St. Peter's—Coronation of Charles as emperor—Three different accounts of the event—Significance of the event.

Pope Adrian died, a little after the reopening of the Saxon war, on Christmas Day, 795. Charles sincerely regretted him, and composed his epitaph, which may still be read on this pontiff's tomb at Rome:—

"I, Charles, have written these verses, mourning for a well-beloved father. . . . I desire to write upon his tomb our names and titles—Charles and Adrian; I the king, thou the father. . . . O excellent father, remember me, and pray for me, that thy son may one day rejoin thee in the heavenly kingdom of Christ."

Immediately after the burial of the late pope,

which, according to the custom of the time, took place on the next day, the clergy and the chief men of the city, and the people, elected Leo III. to fill the vacant see. The newly elected pope hastened to send an embassy to Charles, excusing himself for having accepted the impulsive and unanimous election without waiting for his confirmation. The ambassadors carried with them the keys of the confession * of St. Peter, and the keys and standard of the city, and requested him to send a representative to receive the oath of obedience and fidelity of the Romans. Charles selected Angilbert, Abbot of St. Riquier, one of the leading prelates of his court, for this honourable mission. He sent to the new bishop, as presents, some of the spoils which had been lately taken from the Hunnish citadel, the Ring; and the distinguished ambassador was the bearer of a letter from the King of the Franks and King of the Lombards and Patrician of Rome, to the newly elected prelate. In the first place, he confirmed the canonical election of the clergy and people. Then he entered into the question of their relations in a manner which throws great light upon the way in which Charles regarded them. "We have directed Angilbert," he says, "to arrange with you, in our name, the measures which may seem desirable to maintain the welfare of the Holy Church of God, and to confirm your authority and our patriciate: for the agreement which I made

* The crypt before the altar of the basilica of St. Peter, which contained the Apostle's tomb.

with the blessed predecessor of your Paternity, I desire to continue with your Blessedness in the same inviolable bond of faith and charity. . . . It is our task to defend in all places, with the help of the Divine mercy, the Holy Church of Christ, by repelling the attacks of infidels from without, and by defending within the Church the Catholic truth; as it is your part, most Holy Father, to aid our arms, by lifting up your hands, like Moses, to heaven, that by your intercession God, our Guide, may everywhere give the victory to Christian people over the enemies of His Holy Name, and that our Lord Jesus Christ may be glorified throughout the universe." In the latter part of the letter he addresses the new pope in a tone of exhortation, which again throws a flood of light upon the king's conception of their mutual relations. He recommends to the pope a scrupulous observance of the canons; he exhorts him to give in his conduct and in his words examples and counsels of edification—"that you may make your light shine in the eyes of men; that, finding your works to be good works, they may glorify your Father which is in heaven."

In a private letter of instructions to his ambassador, he writes in the same strain: "Repeat to him often how few years he can possibly enjoy this dignity here, and how durable the reward reserved in eternity for those who shall have well fulfilled his office. Persuade him to destroy the simoniacal heresy which in so many places defiles the body of the Church; and speak to him of all those things

which you will remember that you and I have so often lamented. May the Lord guide and keep you; may He direct into all goodness the heart of Leo, and dispose him to do all which shall be profitable to the Holy Church, and make him a good father and intercessor for us, that Jesus Christ may make us prosper in the execution of His will, and guide the remainder of our life towards the eternal rest. May you have a prosperous journey, make progress in the truth, and return with joy, my little Homer.*

Two years passed away after the election of the new pope, during which Charles was occupied with his wars in Saxony, Pannonia, and Spain, when an event occurred which showed the great ambitions and the fierce passions which seethed beneath the decorous and religious exterior of the Roman court. A conspiracy, headed by two nephews of the late pope, high officials of the Roman Church, fell upon the pope as he was being carried through the streets to take part in some customary ceremony in one of its churches, attempted to put out his eyes and cut out his tongue, stripped him of his robes, and cast him a prisoner into a cell of the monastery of St. Stephen. Some of his friends, however, made their way into the monastery and released him, and carried him to the Vatican. The Frank Duke of Spoleto, on hearing the news, marched with a small force and brought him safely out of Rome, and the

* Homer, as we shall see (p. 315), was, in the court circle, the literary pseudonym of the Abbot of St. Riquier.

dispossessed prelate took his journey to find Charles at Paderborn.

The triumphant faction in Rome also sent envoys to the king, accusing the deposed pope of crimes, and excusing his deposition. Charles sent the pope back with a sufficient force to replace him in his see, and sent with him ten commissioners to inquire into the causes of the revolt, and to send the authors of it to him for punishment.

In the following year (800), Charles resolved to visit Rome in person. Having this spring no warlike expedition on foot, he made a progress through Neustria. To this period belongs the anecdote related by the monk of St. Gall, of Charles being eye-witness to one of the piratical expeditions of the Normans, and of his melancholy foresight of the scourge these hardy freebooters were destined to become to his realm. "It happened that Charles arrived unexpectedly at a seaside town. While at table, some barks of the Norman pirates appeared within view of the port. Some took them for Jewish merchants, other for Africans, or Britons. But the experienced king recognized, by the build and the swiftness of these vessels, that they were not vessels of commerce, but of war. 'These ships,' he cried, 'are full, not of merchandise, but of bitter enemies.' All who were present hastened to the attack of these enemies, but in vain; for the Normans, having learnt that he whom they were accustomed to call Charles Martel was there, fearing to encounter the hero, withdrew with unaccustomed

speed not only from the blows, but from the sight of their pursuers. . . . But the religious Charles, rising from table, leaned against a window, and remained there a long time plunged in thought, with the tears flowing down his face. None of his great men dared to question him, but he addressed them: 'Do you know, my liege-men, why I weep? I do not fear that these men can hurt us, but it afflicts me that while I live they have dared to insult my coasts, and I foresee with grief what evil they will do to my descendants and their subjects.'"

In truth, when Charles had conquered all his enemies on every side on land, then they began to spring up on every side by sea. The pagan pirates from the Danish and Scandinavian peninsulas began not merely to harry the coasts, but to penetrate by the rivers into the very heart of the country, and at last, as we English well know, won a whole province in the north of France. At the same time the Saracen pirates began to harry the sea-coasts of the Mediterranean, and continued to practise piracy as a legitimate form of warfare down to the end of the last century.

At Tours Charles remained for three months, detained partly by the illness and death of his young wife, Luitgarda, who in seven years of a gentle reign had almost effaced the recollection of the evil influence of Fastrada.

Towards the end of November Charles arrived at Rome. His first care was to convoke an assembly

of the chief men of the city, and to summon the accusers of the pope to prove their accusations against him. The clergy declared that it was beyond their authority to sit in judgment on the pope. It is the same constitutional difficulty which Charles the first raised when he said that there was no tribunal which could lawfully try him. Nevertheless the patrician, representing the Imperial authority, which had often before brought popes before its tribunal, held several sittings of his high court of justice, and invited witnesses to come forward. When none appeared, Charles called upon Leo to free himself by oath of the charges which had been made against him. The pope being thus formally acquitted, the ringleaders of the conspiracy against him were arraigned; they attempted no defence, and were condemned to death, but at the intercession of the pope their fate was commuted for perpetual exile.

Thus the days of December passed, and the great festival of Christmas arrived, and all the world flocked to the basilica of St. Peter's, to the great eucharistic service of the day.

The basilica, the gift of Constantine to the Roman Church, was a vast and splendid building, divided by four rows of Corinthian columns, into a nave and double aisles. At the upper end, behind the altar, was the elevated seat of the bishop, with the principal clergy on their semi-circular bench on each side of him; in front of the altar, the large open crypt called the Confession of St. Peter, within

which was the Apostle's shrine. It must have been a magnificent sight. The sanctuary and choir filled with the clergy in their white vestments; the rest of the church occupied on one side by the senators and nobles of Rome, still retaining their ancient costume of state—the white tunic with its laticlave and the embroidered toga; on the other side by the great officials of the Frank king, in their national costume, of which the banded drawers and furred cloak would especially attract the spectator's eye—Charles alone of the Franks wearing the unwonted costume of a Roman patrician; the rest of the vast nave filled with a mixed crowd of Romans and of Franks.

Charles, on entering the church, descended the stairs into the Chapel of the Confession to pay his homage at the Apostle's shrine. As he reascended and appeared in sight of all the people, in front of the altar, the pope stepped forward with a golden crown, which he placed upon his head; those who surrounded him raised the cry, which echoed again and again through the great building: "Carolus Augustus, a Deo coronatus, Imperator magnus et pacificus, vita et victoria." Then the pope set the example of doing homage to the new emperor, which was followed by the rest of the nobles and clergy, Italian and Frank.

The coronation of Charles as emperor is the central point in the transition from the ancient to the mediæval history of Europe. It was a gorgeous representation of the union between the ancient

Latin civilization and the fresh vitality of the barbarian races, which had long been in progress, which was not yet complete. The coronation of Charles by the pope is the source of that interaction between the emperor and the papacy which so largely influenced the history of the middle age.

What is, perhaps, of most importance to us, is that this event was for centuries afterwards quoted in support of opposite theories of the relations between Church and State, which had a great influence upon the practical politics, and a lasting effect upon the Christianity of Europe. We are now in the period of confusion which has succeeded upon the failure of these mediæval relations of Church and State, out of which new relations have to be evolved. We shall all do well to make ourselves acquainted with the lessons of the past, in view of the practical work of the future.

The best way, perhaps, of showing the thoughts and motives of those actually concerned in this important transaction, is to transcribe the narratives of three contemporary, or almost contemporary, annalists, two of them German and one Italian. The annals of Laureshcim say :—

"And because the name of emperor had now ceased among the Greeks, and their empire was possessed by a woman, it then seemed, both to Leo the pope himself, and to all the holy fathers, who were present in the selfsame council, as well as

to the rest of the Christian people, that they ought to take to be emperor Charles, King of the Franks, who held Rome herself, where the Cæsars had always been wont to sit, and all the other regions which he ruled through Italy and Gaul and Germany; and inasmuch as God had given all these lands into his hand, it seemed right that, with the help of God, and at the prayer of the whole Christian people, he should have the name of emperor also. Whose petition King Charles willed not to refuse, but submitting himself with all humility to God, and at the prayer of the priests and of the whole Christian people, on the day of the nativity of our Lord Jesus Christ, he took on himself the name of emperor, being consecrated by the Lord Pope Leo."

Very similar in substance is the account of the chronicle of Moissac :—

"Now when the king, upon the most holy day of the Lord's birth, was rising to the mass, after praying before the confession of the blessed Peter the Apostle, Leo the pope, with the consent of all the bishops and priests, and of the senate of the Franks, and likewise of the Romans, set a golden crown upon his head, the Roman people also shouting aloud. And when the people had made an end of chanting the Lauds, he was adored by the pope after the manner of the emperors of old. For this also was done by the will of God. For while the said emperor abode at Rome, certain men were brought unto him, who said that the name of

emperor had ceased among the Greeks, and that among them the empire was held by a woman called Irene, who had by guile laid hold of her son, the emperor, and put out his eyes, and taken the empire to herself, as it is written of Athalia in the Book of the Kings; which, when Leo the pope and all the assembled bishops and priests and abbots heard, and the senate of the Franks and all the elders of the Romans, they took counsel with the rest of the Christian people, that they should name Charles, King of the Franks, to be emperor, seeing that he held Rome, the mother of empire, where the Cæsars and emperors were always used to sit, and that the heathen might not mock the Christians if the name of emperor should have ceased among the Christians."

The third account is by a Roman writer, written probably within fifty or sixty years of the event. It is taken from the Life of Leo III., in the "Vitæ Pontificorum Romanorum," compiled by Anastasius, the Papal librarian:—

"After these things came the day of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ, and all men were gathered together in the basilica of the blessed Peter the Apostle; and then the gracious and venerable pontiff did, with his own hands, crown Charles with a very precious crown. Then all the faithful people of Rome, seeing the defence that he gave, and the love that he bare to the holy Roman Church and her vicar, did, by the will of God and of the blessed Peter, the keeper of the keys of the king-

dom of heaven, cry with one accord with a loud voice, 'To Charles, the most pious Augustus, crowned of God, the great and peace-giving emperor, be life and victory.' While he, before the holy confession of the blessed Peter the Apostle, was invoking divers saints, it was proclaimed there that he was chosen by all to be emperor of the Romans. Thereupon the most holy pontiff anointed Charles with holy oil, and likewise his most excellent son to be king, upon the very day of the birth of our Lord Jesus Christ; and when the mass was finished, then after the mass the most serene lord emperor offered gifts."

Charles was actually lord of Rome, the ancient seat of empire, and of the territory which anciently formed the western half of the ancient empire.* The Franks might very naturally think, as they had done in the case of Pepin, that he who possessed the power and authority of empire should also bear the title and dignity of emperor. The Romans had made up their minds, in consideration of their own interests, to break the last link of formal acknowledgment of subjection to the court of Constantinople, and to revive the empire of the West.

It was clearly a politic stroke to bind their friendly and powerful protector still more strongly to their interests; it was of still more obvious advantage to get Rome adopted as the capital of the

* What he lacked of the ancient limits of the Western Empire on the side of Spain, was more than balanced by the extension of his dominion beyond the Rhine.

new Franco-Italian empire, and so to recover for Rome a part, at least, of its ancient prosperity and glory. It would gratify the Latin race everywhere —in Italy, in Aquitaine, in Neustria—to know that they were no longer governed by a king of the Franks and the Lombards, but that the Franks and the Lombards were absorbed in the revived empire.

The legal aspect of the transaction is that the senate, which, three centuries before, had deposed Augustulus, declined to elect another emperor for the West, and returned the Imperial ornaments to Constantinople, now assumed to itself the right to revive the empire of the West, and to elect Charles as emperor. The assumption that the empire of the East had ceased to exist, and that Charles was the immediate successor of Constantine VI., was clearly a diplomatic weapon intended to be used in the controversy which was certain to ensue with the Byzantine court. It prepared the way for a compromise in which each emperor should recognize the other.

Eginhard tells us that Charles was accustomed to declare that, had he known the pope's intention, he would not have entered the basilica of St. Peter on that day. There is sufficient evidence that the assumption of the Imperial dignity had been the subject of previous discussion both among the Romans and the Franks, that all desired it, and that Charles was not unwilling to accept it. We suppose Eginhard to mean nothing more than that

Charles had not expected the important step to be taken when and as it was. He may have been negotiating with Constantinople for a recognition of the revival of the empire of the West; or, for some other reason, he may have thought the time was not yet ripe. But his hand was forced, and he showed his prompt sagacity in allowing it to be so. The *Senatus Populusque Romani* offered him the Imperial dignity, by the hand of the prelate who had long been recognized as the political leader of their *Respublica*, in a great assembly of all that was noblest in Rome, amidst the Frankish prelates and counsellors and captains. He could not openly refuse it when tendered under such circumstances, to claim it a little later as the result of a transaction with the Byzantine court. He acted wisely that he did not hesitate a moment then, however he may have expressed his dissatisfaction afterwards to his own intimates.

At first sight, it seems as if his accession to the Imperial title could make very little practical difference in the affairs of Charles's dominions. It might seem that, as Charles Martel had been virtually king long before the Franks gave his son Pepin the title, so Charles, his grandson, had been virtually emperor long before the Romans added the Imperial style and dignity. But in the eyes of Western Christendom the election and coronation of Christmas Day, 800, did something more than grace with the Imperial title one who was already *de facto* emperor. It revived the idea of

the Empire—not the empire of Augustus, but the empire of Constantine and Theodosius. That Christian empire had seemed to the world for a time to be the realization of the fifth universal monarchy. It had been submerged beneath the waves of barbarism, and apparently lost. It was now re-established in new vigour, like Jerusalem after the Babylonian captivity. The old Roman theory had not, after a lapse of three centuries, died out, that the emperor was the sacred centre and source of all authority. In the eyes of contemporary Europe, the election and consecration of Charles to the empire gave a wider range and a new sacredness to his authority. The best evidence of this is derived from the acts of the new emperor himself.

On his return to Germany, a great assembly was held at Aix in 802, in which the emperor issued a capitulary by which he requires all persons within his dominions, as well ecclesiastical as civil, although they may have already sworn allegiance to him as king, to take a new oath of obedience to him as emperor. "At the same time, he enacts, it shall be publicly explained to all what is the force and meaning of this oath, and how much more it includes than a mere promise of fidelity to the monarch's person. Firstly, it binds those who swear it to live, each and every one of them according to his strength and knowledge, in the holy service of God, since the lord emperor cannot extend over all his care and discipline. Secondly, it bids them neither by force nor fraud to seize or

molest any of the goods or servants of the crown. Thirdly, to do no violence nor treason towards the holy Church, or to widows or orphans or strangers, seeing that the lord emperor has been appointed, after the Lord and His saints, the protector and defender of all such. Then, in similar fashion, purity of life is prescribed to the monks; homicide, the neglect of hospitality, and other offences are denounced, the notions of sin and crime being intermingled and almost identified in a way to which no parallel can be found, except it be in the Mosaic code. There God, the invisible object of worship, is also the Judge and political Ruler of Israel. Here, the whole cycle of social and moral duty is deduced from the obligation of obedience to the visible autocratic, Imperial head of the Christian Church." *

The relation of the emperor to the Church, as Charles understood it, was the revival of the relation of "the godly kings of the Old Testament" to the Jewish Church, the relation of Constantine and the other early Christian emperors to the Church of Christ; not interfering with the special functions of the ministry, not violating the canons of the Church, but using all his power for the maintenance of Christian faith and Christian discipline within the Church, for the protection of the Church from oppression, and for the propagation of the faith throughout the world. Charles

* Bryce, "Holy Roman Empire," p. 65.

recognized an authority in the Roman See which we, under the pressure of subsequent usurpations and tyrannies, have found it necessary to repudiate altogether; but all that Charles recognized was that the see of Rome was the patriarchal see of Western Christendom, and possessed a visitatorial authority over all its Churches.

This was Charles's view, and the view which the statesmen, ecclesiastical and lay, of his age had formed of the relations of the Church and the State. But "the event admitted of being afterwards represented in different lights. In subsequent times three distinct theories regarding the coronation of Charles will be found advocated by three different parties, all of them plausible, all of them to some extent misleading. The Swabian emperors held the crown to have been won by their great predecessor as the prize of conquest, and drew the conclusion that the citizens and Bishop of Rome had no rights as against themselves. The patriotic party among the Romans, appealing to the early history of the empire, declared that by nothing but the voice of their senate and people could an emperor be lawfully created, he being only their chief magistrate—the temporary depository of their authority. The popes pointed to the indisputable fact that Leo imposed the crown, and argued that as God's earthly vicar it was then his, and must always continue to be their right to give to whomsoever they would an office which was created to be

the handmaid of their own. Of these three it was the last view which ultimately prevailed, yet to an impartial eye it cannot claim any more than do the two others to contain the whole truth." *

* Bryce, "Holy Roman Empire," p. 57.

CHAPTER XXI.

CHARLES'S PERSONAL CHARACTER AND DOMESTIC LIFE.

His alliances—Anecdote of his reception of ambassadors—His buildings—His wives and children—Education of his children—His affection for them—Loved the resort of foreigners to his court—Description of his person and habits—His costume—His habits at table—His learning—His devotion.

THIS is perhaps a convenient place for giving those particulars of the personality and the private life of the great Frank emperor, which not only are the "touches of nature" which form the closest link of interest between the men of exceptional fortunes and the rest of mankind, but which also help us to understand their public character and career.

Eginhard has given us so full and skilful a sketch of the subject, that we need do little more than select from what he has given, and illustrate it here and there from other sources, and our task is fulfilled.

"He increased the glory of his reign by conciliating the friendship of many kings and many

nations. He attached to himself Alphonso, King of Gallicia and the Asturias, by so close an alliance that this prince, on sending letters or ambassadors to him, was content to style himself his 'man.' The kings of the Scots, won by his magnificence, also had so great a respect for his will that they never gave him any other name than 'Lord,' and declared themselves his subjects and serfs. He maintained so firm a friendship with Haroun, King of Persia (the famous Haroun-al-Raschid), who possessed all the East save India, that this prince estimated his friendship before the alliance of all the kings upon the earth, and to him alone did he accord tokens of honour and munificence. Thus, when the ambassadors whom Charles had sent with presents to visit the holy sepulchre of our Divine Saviour, and the place of the resurrection, presented themselves before him and expressed their master's desire, he did not content himself with granting the king's request, but he desired to make him the sole proprietor of the places consecrated by the mystery of our redemption. On their return he sent with them ambassadors of his own, to present to Charles, besides silks, perfumes, and other rich products of the East, the most magnificent gifts. Already, some years before, he had, at his request, sent him an elephant, which he still had. The Emperors of Constantinople, Nicephorus, Michael, and Leo, desirous of obtaining the friendship and alliance of Charles, were the first to send him ambassadors. They had been put in great anxiety on seeing him

assume the title of "Emperor," which seemed to imply designs against their power. But he contracted so firm an alliance with them, that there remained no cause for disagreement. But, indeed, the power of the Franks has always given umbrage to the Greeks and the Romans, so that there is a Greek proverb which says, 'Have the Frank for a friend, but not for a neighbour.'"

The monk of St. Gall adds some stories on the subject of his dealing with these ambassadors. "Some envoys of his own to the Byzantine court, a bishop and a count, had been made to wait a long time for an audience, and to go from place to place till their means as well as their patience were almost exhausted, and then they had been treated with scant courtesy. Not long after the emperor sent ambassadors to Charles. The bishop and the count suggested that they should be repaid in their own coin. Accordingly, they were led about, across the Alps and through wilds, till they were worn out with the hardships and impoverished by the costs of the journey. When at last they arrived where Charles was, they entered into the court-yard of the palace, and saw there an imposing-looking Frank sitting surrounded by attendants; they supposed it was the emperor, and were about to prostrate themselves before him, when they were told with a smile that this was the count of the stables, that they would find Charles within the palace. When they entered the hall, they saw a more dignified personage sitting in the hall

among a group of officers. Supposing this, therefore, to be the emperor, they were again going to do homage, when they were told this was the count of the palace—they would find Charles in his chamber beyond. In the next chamber was a still more imposing personage, with a larger attendance of richly adorned officials, to whom again they were going to do homage, but were told he was the *Magister Regiæ*. Here they were detained while permission was sought for them to be admitted to the presence of the king. The mortified courtiers of the Byzantine emperor were at last ceremoniously ushered into the audience chamber, and there found Charles, 'most glorious of kings,' glittering like the rising sun with gold and gems, leaning on the shoulder of the bishop who on his embassy to Constantinople had been so unhandsomely treated, surrounded as if by the heavenly host by the three kings, his sons, his daughters, and their mother, not less adorned with wisdom and beauty than with jewels; bishops incomparable for dignity and virtues; abbots most distinguished for nobility and sanctity; dukes like him who appeared to Joshua in the camp at Gilgal; and soldiers like those who put to flight the Syrians from Samaria. Then the Greek ambassadors fell to the pavement speechless and half-dead, and Charles generously bade them rise, and attempted to reassure them with friendly words. On another occasion the ambassador of the famous Caliph Haroun-al-Raschid was taken round through Rome,

and so through the great cities of Italy and Gaul, to impress him duly with the grandeur of the kingdom over which the great Charles reigned."

We go back to Eginhard's narrative. "The prince who showed himself so great in the organization of his empire and the conquest of other nations, and who was constantly occupied in the execution of such vast designs, nevertheless undertook numerous works for the ornament and advantage of his kingdom. Among them may especially be noted the basilica of the Holy Mother of our Lord, which he caused to be built at Aix-la-Chapelle with admirable art, and a bridge of five hundred paces long constructed at Mayence, across the Rhine. He began two palaces of remarkable labour; one near the domain of Ingelheim, not far from Mayence, the other at Nimeguen. But the sacred edifices throughout the whole extent of his realm were the special objects of his care. As soon as he learnt that these ornaments were falling into decay, he wrote to the bishops and religious who had the guardianship of them to cause them to be restored, and appointed commissioners to watch over the fulfilment of his orders. . . .

"May I be permitted to express here my admiration for his great qualities, for his invariable equanimity in good as in bad fortune? I will now relate the details of his private and domestic life. After the death of his father, when he had shared the kingdom with his brother Carloman, he bore so

patiently the enmity and jealousy of his brother, that it was a subject of wonder to every one that he did not give way even to any exhibition of anger. Afterwards, having married, at his mother's desire, the daughter of Didier, King of the Lombards, he repudiated her, it is not very well known for what reasons, at the end of a year, and took to wife Hildegarda, the daughter of one of the most illustrious families of the nation of the Suevi. She bore him three sons, Charles, Pepin, and Louis, and as many daughters, Rotruda, Bertha, and Gisela. He had also three other daughters, Theodorada, Hiltruda, and Ruodhaid; the first two by Fastrada, his third wife, who was of the Austrasians; the third by a concubine whose name escapes me at the moment. When he had lost Fastrada, he married an Alleman named Luitgarda, by whom he had no children. After the death of the latter he had four concubines: Multegarda, who bore him a daughter named Rothilda; Gersuinda, of Saxon origin, by whom he had Adaltruda the queen, who was the mother of Drogon * and of Hugues; † and, lastly, Adalinda, by whom he had Thierry. His mother Bertrada grew old beside him, loaded with honours. He always showed the greatest respect to her, and never did the slightest cloud arise between them, except on the occasion of his divorce from the daughter of King Didier, whom he had married by her advice. She died after the Queen Hildegarda, having already seen three grandsons and as many

* Bishop of Metz in 823. † Abbot of St. Quentin.

granddaughters in her son's house. Charles caused her to be buried with great pomp in the basilica of St. Denis, where already lay the body of her father. He had an only sister, named Gisela, who was consecrated from her earliest years to a monastic life, and to whom, as to his mother, he always showed the greatest affection. She died a few years before him, in the monastery in which she had passed her life.

"According to the plan of education which he adopted for his children, his sons and his daughters were instructed in the liberal studies which he himself cultivated. Then, as soon as the age of his sons permitted, he made them practise, after the custom of the Franks, riding, the use of arms, and hunting. As for his daughters, he not only sought to keep them from idleness by making them learn to work in wool, to use the distaff and spindle, but also to bring them up in all honourable sentiments. Of all his children, he lost, before his own death, only two sons and a daughter: Charles, who was the eldest; Pepin, to whom he had given the kingdom of Italy; and Rotrude, the eldest of his daughters, whom he had affianced to Constantine, Emperor of the Greeks. Pepin, dying, left a son named Bernhard and five daughters, Adalhaida, Atula, Gontrada, Berthrada, and Theodorada. The conduct of the king towards them was a distinguished proof of his goodness, for he willed that the son of Pepin should succeed his father, and that his daughters should be brought up together with his

own. He did not bear the loss of his sons and of his daughter with all the resignation which might have been expected from his strength of mind; paternal tenderness, which equally distinguished him, drew from him abundant tears; and even when the death of Pope Adrian was announced to him, who was one of the friends to whom he was most attached, he did not weep less than if he had lost a son or brother. He was naturally inclined to ties of friendship, readily contracted them, adhered to them with the greatest constancy, and cultivated with a sort of religion the affection of those to whom he was bound in such bonds. He watched with so much solicitude over the education of his sons and daughters, that so long as he was within his kingdom he never took his meals, never journeyed without them. His sons accompanied him on horseback, his daughters followed him, and some of his guards were charged with the protection of the rear of the cortége. They were very beautiful, and it is astonishing that he would never marry any of them either to his own nobles or to foreigners. Until his death they all lived with him in his palace, for he was unwilling to lose their companionship. So it happened that though he was fortunate in all other respects, he experienced in the case of his daughters the malignity of fortune.* But he dis-

* The licence which Charles took himself was imitated by others. It was a dissolute court, and the daughters whom he refused to allow to marry did not escape the contagion. We do not choose to illustrate the subject by the well-known story of the

simulated his annoyance, as if no suspicion had ever been entertained and spread abroad respecting them.

"He loved the resort of foreigners to his court, and received them so well, that not unfrequently their number was so great as to be a burden not only on the palace, but on the kingdom. As for him, he had a soul too great to feel incommoded by such a concourse, and he thought himself sufficiently repaid by the praises which they gave to his liberality and by the advantage of an honourable fame.

"He was large and robust in person; his stature was lofty, though it did not exceed a just proportion, for his height was not more than seven times the length of his foot. The summit of his head was round, his eyes large and bright, his nose a little long, beautiful white hair, and a smiling and pleasant expression. There reigned in his whole person, whether standing or seated, an air of grandeur and dignity; and though his neck was thick and short, and his body corpulent, yet he was in other respects so well proportioned that these defects were not noticed. His walk was firm, and his whole appearance manly, but his clear voice did not quite harmonize with his appearance."

There exists no absolutely contemporary portrait. His coinage, to which we naturally look for the

liaison between one of the princesses and Eginhard, whose account we are quoting. We will only say that the recent editors of Eginhard seem to prove that it was not he who was the hero of the scandalous story.

portraits of kings, was of the lowest style of design, any attempt at a royal effigy being of the most conventional kind—until we come to his assumption of the Imperial title; then coins were struck in Italy of the same style of design as those of the contemporary Byzantine emperors, with a laureated head; but this also appears to be little better than a conventional effigy.

The famous mosaic of the Triclinium of St. John Lateran at Rome, which represents St. Peter giving the keys to Pope Leo III. and the standard to Charles, is a contemporary work of art. It represents Charles in the national costume of banded legs and short cloak, with a gold circlet on his head, the face broad and strong, with shorn chin and cheeks, and wearing a short moustache.

"His health was always good, except during the four years which preceded his death. He had then frequent attacks of fever; at the last, indeed, he was lame of one foot. In this time of suffering he treated himself more according to his own fancies than by the advice of the physicians, whom he had come to dislike, because they would have had him abstain from the roast meats he was accustomed to, and would have restricted him to boiled meats. He gave himself up assiduously to riding and hunting. It was a national taste with him, for it would be difficult to find in all the world a people who could equal the Franks in these two exercises. Baths of natural hot waters he delighted in. Passionately fond of

swimming, he became so skilful in it that no one could be compared with him in it. It was this which induced him to build a palace at Aix-la-Chapelle, and to reside there constantly during the latter years of his life and up to his death. He invited to bathe with him not only his sons, but also his friends, the great men of his court, and sometimes even the soldiers of his guard, so that often a hundred persons and more bathed at the same time. His dress was that of his nation, that is to say, of the Franks. Next the skin he wore a shirt of linen, and drawers of the same material; over that a tunic bordered with a silken fringe, stockings fastened with narrow bands, and shoes. In winter, a coat of otter or martin fur covered his shoulders and breast. Over all he wore a blue mantle." From the monk of St. Gall we learn that the Franks generally had adopted a short cloak, but that Charles still wore the long and ample cloak of the ancient Franks. "Of what use, he would say, "are these short mantles? I cannot cover myself with it in bed, and on horseback it does not protect me from rain or wind." Perhaps he was not unconscious that the long and ample cloak became his tall and portly figure, and distinguished him like a royal robe amidst his short-cloaked courtiers. "And he was always girded with his sword,* whose hilt and baldrick were of gold or silver. Sometimes he wore one enriched with precious stones, but this

* The romance heroes have famous swords, which have names. The name of Charlemagne's sword was "Joyeuse."

was only at the most solemn festivals, or when he had to receive the deputies of some foreign nation. He did not like the dress of other peoples, however handsome, and would never wear them, except at Rome, when first, at the request of Adrian, and then of Leo his successor, he allowed himself to be clad in the long tunic, the chlamys, and the sandal of the Romans. At the great festivals his dress was embroidered with gold, and his shoes adorned with precious stones, a brooch of gold fastened his mantle, and he went crowned with a sparkling diadem of gold and gems; but on other days his dress was simple, and differed little from that of the people.

"His temperance made him avoid all the excesses of the table, above all that of drinking; for he detested drunkenness, in whoever it might be, and especially in himself and those belonging to him. But he did not find it so easy to abstain from eating, and often complained of the inconvenience which the fasts caused him. It was seldom he gave banquets, except at the great festivals, and then he invited a great number of guests. His usual meal consisted of four dishes, without counting the roast, which was usually brought to him on the spit by the huntsmen, and of which he eat with more pleasure than of anything else. While at table, he liked to hear a recital or a reading, and it was histories and the great deeds of past times which were usually read to him. He took great pleasure, also, in the works of St. Augustine, and especially in that whose title is

'De Civitate Dei.' He was so moderate in the use of wine, and of all kinds of drink, that he seldom drank more than three times in the whole time of a meal. In summer, after the midday meal, he took some fruit, drank a single cup of wine, and putting off his clothes and shoes, as at night, he slept for two or three hours. At night he interrupted his sleep four or five times, not only waking, but quitting his bed. While dressing, he admitted his friends, and if the count of the palace informed him of some cause which needed his personal decision, he caused the parties interested to be brought in, heard the cause, and gave judgment as if he had been seated on his tribunal. It was not only this kind of business which he transacted at this time, but everything which had to be done that day, and the orders which he had to give to his ministers.

"Endowed with an abundant and irresistible eloquence, he expressed his meaning with clearness. Not content with knowing his native tongue, he applied himself to the study of other languages, and especially of Latin, which he learnt well enough to speak it as well as his mother tongue. As for Greek, he understood it better than he spoke it. In short, he spoke with such facility, that he even spoke a little too much. Passionately attached to the liberal arts, he had always a great veneration for those who taught them, and heaped honours upon them. The deacon Peter of Pisa, who was then in his old age, gave him lessons in

grammar. He had, as his master in other sciences, another deacon named Albin, surnamed Alcuin, born in Britain and of Saxon race, the most learned man of his age. The king devoted much time and labour to the study of rhetoric with him, dialectics, and, above all, astronomy. He learnt to calculate, and took great pains to study the motions of the stars with as much diligence as sagacity. He tried to write, and he had always under the pillow of his bed leaves and tablets to practise writing the letters when he had time. But he made little progress in this accomplishment, which did not suit his age, and which he had begun too late.

"He practised the Christian religion in all its purity and with great fervour, whose principles had been taught him from his infancy. Therefore he caused to be erected at Aix-la-Chapelle a magnificent basilica, which he adorned with gold and silver, with candelabra, with screens and gates of massive brass, and for which he caused to be brought from Rome and from Ravenna* marbles and columns which could not be procured elsewhere. He diligently attended this church in the evening and morning, and even at night, to assist at the offices and at the holy sacrifice, as much as his

* It is probable that Ravenna supplied not only the marbles for the church at Aix, but that the church of San Vitale at Ravenna, begun by Theodoric and finished by Justinian, supplied a model to Charles's architects. This great church at Aix, being the first of any considerable size which had been erected in these regions for two centuries or more, excited extraordinary interest among the Franks and Gauls.

health permitted him. He watched with care that nothing should be done but with the greatest propriety, constantly ordering the guardians of the church not to allow anything to be brought there or left there inconsistent with or unworthy of the sanctity of the place. He presented to them a great number of vessels of gold and silver, and such a number of vestments for the divine service that the very porters, who are the lowest of the ecclesiastical order, had special vestments in which to exercise their office. He introduced great improvements in the lessons and in the psalmody, for he himself was very skilful in it, although he never read in public, and he chanted only in a low voice with the rest of the congregation."

The monk of St. Gall tells us that Charles was accustomed to mark the beginning and end of the lesson for the reader, and to point with his finger to the clerk who was to chant; and he tells two or three curious anecdotes on the subject. How clerks, who could not sing well, ran risk of disgrace by coming into the choir; how one whom he bade to sing opened his mouth and rolled his head about as if he were singing with the others, but suffered no sound to come out of his mouth. How a clerk, who had been promoted to a bishopric, gave a feast on the occasion, and indulged so freely at it, that he could not sing at service afterwards, and how another clerk took up the chant and sung it so well that Charles took away the see from the one and gave it to the other.

"He was always ready to help the poor, and it was not only in his own country or within his own dominions that he dispensed those gratuitous liberalities which the Greeks call 'alms,' but beyond the seas—in Syria, in Egypt, in Africa, at Jerusalem, at Alexander, at Carthage, everywhere where he learned that Christians were living in poverty—he pitied their misery and loved to send them money. If he sought with so much care the friendship of foreign sovereigns, it was, above all, to procure for the Christians living under their rule help and relief. Of all the holy places, he had, above all, a great veneration for the church of the Apostle St. Peter at Rome. He spent large sums for objects of silver and gold and precious stones to present to it. The popes received in this way from him innumerable and rich gifts, and during his whole reign he had nothing more at heart than to restore Rome to her ancient dignity. He wished not only that the church of St. Peter should be defended and protected by him, but that by means of his donations it should surpass all other churches in its decoration and its riches; yet, in spite of his love for this church, during the forty-seven years that his reign lasted, he was only able four times to go thither to make his prayers and offer his vows."

CHAPTER XXII.

THE REVIVAL OF LEARNING.

The decay of classical learning—The character of the monastic schools—Learning valued by the Frank sovereigns—Charles invites Paul the Deacon to his court—The schools of York—Its library—Charles invites Alcuin to his court—The literary courtiers—The Chartulary of 787—The new Homilary—The popular schools—Alcuin returns to the abbacy of St. Martin at Tours—Is succeeded in the Palatine school by Clement of Ireland—Charles's encouragement of the Palatine scholars—Death of Alcuin—His character—Charles's literary character.

THE feature of Charles's character and work to which the historian naturally turns with the greatest sympathy is his love of learning and the wise and strenuous encouragement of it from which dates the revival of letters in Europe.

The elegant culture of which the letters of Sidonius have given us so charming a glimpse, had long since died out of the countries between the Alps and the English Channel. The Imperial schools, which we have seen still existed in the towns of Gaul in the time of the grandsons of Clovis, had fallen into neglect and decay. If the

Frank conquerors had gradually progressed from their original barbarism, the civilization of the conquered race had gradually deteriorated in the midst of perpetual war, until at last, about the time of Charles Martel, the whole people had reached the lowest point of civilization to which Gaul had sunk since it learnt the language and the manners of Rome.

Letters had taken refuge in the monasteries; but the monastic schools did not fulfil the place of the old Imperial schools. Pagan literature was very naturally disliked and discouraged by the Church, and the schools of the monasteries took a narrower range.

The advantages of learning were indeed recognized by the Frank princes from the first, and Clovis, and his sons and grandsons, encouraged some of their young nobility to qualify themselves for high places in the State and in the Church. No doubt Pepin and Carloman, with the assistance of Boniface, in regulating and reforming the Frankish Church, did something to encourage learning. Pepin, we have seen, had the Italian scholar, Peter of Pisa, at his court as tutor to the young princes and the young nobles of the court. But the adoption of general measures to revive learning throughout the kingdom was the work of Charlemagne, and is one of his best claims to the gratitude of posterity.

It was about the year 780 that he induced an eminent Lombard scholar, Paul the Deacon, to take up his residence at his court, and to undertake

the instruction of all who chose to attend his lectures. In the following year he met with the scholar whose name is more especially associated with that of Charles in the revival of learning.

It was at Parma, during Charles's expedition to Italy, that a group of Anglo-Saxon ecclesiastics were introduced to him, who had been to Rome to fetch the pallium for Eanbold, the newly elected Archbishop of York. Chief of them was Alcuin, who held the honourable office of master of the schools of York, in which he had succeeded the new archbishop.

The schools of Britain and Ireland had at this time a considerable reputation. The school of York was one of the most famous of them. Theodore of Tarsus, Archbishop of Canterbury, and the Abbot Adrian, the companion of his labours, were both men of considerable learning, and they had taken pains to establish schools in England. Bede (673–735) had gained for himself and for the Northumbrian schools a European reputation; Egbert, his scholar and friend, had maintained the high character for learning of the school of York; Egbert had been the master of Elbert, and Eanbold the new archbishop, and Alcuin, had been schoolfellows under Elbert. When Elbert succeeded Egbert as archbishop, Eanbold succeeded Elbert in the schools; when Eanbold was in turn raised to the see, Alcuin succeeded him as *scholasticus;* so that Alcuin was a scholar of great reputation, and in a position in which he might naturally expect

to succeed in his turn to the see of York. The school of York had maintained the Roman traditions derived from its founders; it taught the theology of Augustine and of Gregory the Great, and it regarded Rome as the mother of Western Christendom.*

* Alcuin himself has left behind him a catalogue of the books in the library of York, which is a very interesting monument of the state of literature at this time:—

"Illic invenies veterum vestigia Patrum,
Quidquid habet pro se Latio Romanus in orbe,
Græcia vel quidquid transmisit clara Latinis:
Hebraicus vel quod populus bibit imbre superno,
Africa lucifluo vel quidquid lumine sparsit.
Quod Pater Hieronymus, quod sensit Hilarius, atque
Ambrosius, præsul, simul Augustinus, et ipse
Sanctus Athanasius, Quod Orosius edit avitus:
Quidquid Gregorius summus docet, et Leo papa;
Basilius quidquid, Fulgentius atque coruscant.
Cassiodorus item, Chrysostomus atque Joannes.
Quidquid et Althelmus docuit, quid Beda magister.
Quæ Victorinus scripsere, Boetius: atque
Historici veteres Pompeius, Plinius, ipse
Aut Aristoteles, rhetor quoque Tullius ingens.
Quid quoque Sedulius, vel quid canit ipse Juvencus,
Alcinius (?) et Clemens, Prosper, Paulinus, Orator,
Quid Fortunatus, vel quid Lactantius edunt.
Quod Maro Virgilius, Statius Lucanus, et Auctor:
Artis grammaticæ vel quid scripsere magistri;
Quid Probus atque Phocas, Donatus, Priscianus ve,
Servius, Eutichius, Pompeius, Commenianus.
Invenies alios complures, lector, ibidem
Egregios studiis, arte et sermone magistros,
Plurima qui claro scripsere volumina sensu:
Nomina sed quorum præsenti in carmine scribi
Longius est visum quam plectri postulet usus."

(Migne, 101, 843.)

In the scholasticus of York, King Charles recognized the kind of man he needed to take the lead in that revival of learning on which he was intent. Alcuin listened to his proposals, and agreed to accept his offers, provided that when he reached England, in discharging his embassy, the archbishop and the Northumbrian king should give their consent; and in 782 Alcuin took up his residence at the court of the King of the Franks, as master of the Palatine school. The king gave him two abbeys to afford him an income—one near Troyes, and another, Ferrieres, in the diocese of Sens—and no doubt he cared for the well-being of the houses from which he derived his emoluments; but his duties were the teaching of the Palatine school, and the promotion of education throughout the Frank dominions. The king at this time was forty years of age, the scholar was forty-seven.

It was a strangely wandering life which was led by the court of the great Charles. Wherever the military or political affairs of his wide dominions made it necessary for him to fix his residence for a few months, thither his wife and children, his counsellors and secretaries, in short, his whole court, accompanied him,—now in Saxony, now in Aquitaine, now in Lombardy, now on the banks of the Rhine.

The duties of the master of the Palatine school were very much the same as those of the master of any of the great schools of the period. He was

a professor, who delivered public lectures. But seeing he was here the sole professor, he had to lecture on all subjects which he desired that his pupils should learn.

Charles himself had a great thirst for knowledge, and a great desire to encourage learning. He frequently set the example of attending the master's lectures, and such an example was sure to be followed by all who desired to stand well with the king. Still more frequently in conversation he availed himself of the great scholar's supposed capability of solving all questions on all subjects. We take leave to quote a few paragraphs, which place the scene vividly before us: *—

"We find Charles and his courtiers plying the *Vates* from across the Channel with innumerable questions, often blundering strangely and misapprehending wildly, but forming a circle which even at this lapse of time it is impossible to contemplate without interest. The monarch himself, in the ardour of a long unsatisfied curiosity, propounding queries on all imaginable topics; suggesting, distinguishing, objecting, disputing;—a colossal figure, gazing fixedly with bright blue eyes on his admired guest, and altogether a presence that might well have disconcerted a less assured intellect. Alcuin, however, holding fast by his Boethius, Cassiodorus, and Isidorus, is calm and self-possessed;

* "The Schools of Charles the Great," by J. B. Mullinger. London, 1877.

feeling assured that so long as he only teaches what 'Gregorius summus' and 'Bæda venerabilis' believed and taught, he cannot go very far wrong Around him, as the years went by, he saw successively appear the three royal sons, born in rightful wedlock: Charles, the future ruler of Neustria and Austrasia; Pepin, the acknowledged lord of Italy; and Lewis, who almost from his cradle had worn the crown of Aquitaine,—the graceful young athlete and mighty hunter, his mind already opening to that love of learning which, through all the good and evil of his chequered life, he cherished so fondly in his later years. There, again, was Charles's much-loved sister Gisela, Abbess of Chelles, who from her girlhood had renounced the world, but whom the fame of the great teacher drew from her conventual retirement. Thither also came the last and best-loved of Charles's wives, Liutgarda, of the proud Alemannic race, hereafter to prove among the firmest of Alcuin's friends; and the royal daughter, Gisela, whose parental affection held her too dear for the proudest alliance. There, too, was Charles's son-in-law, Angilbert, chiefly distinguished as yet for his fondness for the histrionic art, but afterwards the saintly Abbot of St. Riquier. There, too, were the royal cousins, the half-brothers Adelhard and Wala, whose after action shook the whole fabric of the Carolingian Empire. There, too, was Riculfus, destined ere long to fill the chair of St. Boniface and rule the great see of Mayence; Eginhard, the royal biographer, the classic of the ninth century;

and Fredegis, Alcuin's youthful countryman, poet, and philosopher, not always faithful to his master's teaching.

"It appears to have been a frequent affectation in mediæval times for distinguished men to assume a literary or historic *alias;* and to this custom we must attribute the fact that Alcuin usually in his correspondence addresses the members of this circle under another name. Charles's second name would seem to have really been David, and this fact may account for the assumption of scriptural names by some of his courtiers. Pepin was Julius; Gisela (the sister), Lucia; Gisela (the daughter), Delia; Queen Liutgarda was Ava; Adelhard was Antony; Wala, Arsenius; Eginhard, with reference perhaps to his destined state avocation, was Besaleel; Riculfus, Flavius Damoetus; Rigbod, Machairas; Angilbert, Homer; Fredigis, Nathanael."

There appears, however, little to support the popular idea of a regular Athenæum, or academy of adult members of Charles's court.

For the first five years after Alcuin's arrival (782–787) the mind of the king was occupied with the wars in which he was incessantly engaged; but when, in 785, Witikind laid down his arms and embraced Christianity, Charles had more leisure to turn to the designs of peace. During his residence at Rome, in the winter of 786–7, Charles had secured in the capital of Western learning several teachers of repute, whom, on his return, he distributed among the principal Frank monasteries to aid in

the work of educational revival. Shortly after he issued the famous capitulary of A.D. 787. The copy which has been preserved is that addressed to the Abbot of Fulda:—

"Charles, by the grace of God King of the Franks and of the Lombards, and Patrician of the Romans, to Bangulfus Abbot, and to his whole congregation, and to the faithful committed to his charge:

"Be it known to your Devotion, pleasing to God, that in conjunction with our faithful we have judged it to be of utility that in the bishoprics and monasteries committed by Christ's favour to our charge, care should be taken that there shall be not only a regular manner of life and one conformable to holy religion, but also the study of letters, each to teach and learn them according to his ability and the Divine assistance. For even as due observance of the rule of the house tends to good morals, so zeal on the part of the teacher and the taught imparts order and grace to sentences; and those who seek to please God by living aright, should also not neglect to please Him by right speaking. It is written, 'By thine own words shalt thou be justified or condemned;' and although right doing may be preferable to right speaking, yet must the knowledge of what is right precede right action. Every one, therefore, should strive to understand what it is that he would fain accomplish; and this right understanding will be the sooner gained, according as the utterances of the

tongue are free from error. And if false speaking is to be shunned by all men, especially should it be shunned by those who have elected to be the servants of the truth. During past years we have often received letters from different monasteries, informing us that at their sacred services the brethren offered up prayers on our behalf; and we have observed that the thoughts contained in these letters, though in themselves most just, were expressed in uncouth language, and while pious devotion dictated the sentiments, the unlettered tongue was unable to express them aright! Hence there has arisen in our minds the fear lest, if the skill to write rightly were thus lacking, so too would the power of rightly comprehending the Holy Scriptures be far less than was fitting; and we all know that though verbal errors be dangerous, errors of the understanding are yet more so. We exhort you, therefore, not only not to neglect the study of letters, but to apply yourselves thereto with perseverance, and with that humility which is well pleasing to God, so that you may be able to penetrate with greater ease and certainty the mysteries of the Holy Scriptures. For as these contain images, tropes, and similar figures, it is impossible to doubt that the reader will arrive far more readily at the spiritual sense according as he is the better instructed in learning. Let there, therefore, be chosen for this work men who are both able and willing to learn, and also desirous of instructing others; and let them apply themselves to the work

with a zeal equalling the earnestness with which we recommend it to them.

"It is our wish that you may be what it behoves the soldiers of the Church to be,—religious in heart, learned in discourse, pure in act, eloquent in speech; so that all who approach your house in order to invoke the Divine Master, or to behold the excellence of the religious life, may be edified in beholding you, and instructed in hearing you discourse or chant, and may return home rendering thanks to God most High.

"Fail not, as thou regardest our favour, to send a copy of this letter to all thy suffragans, and to all the monasteries; and let no monk go beyond his monastery to administer justice, or to enter the assemblies and the voting-places. Adieu."

This capitulary appears to have been issued from Augsburg, where he had just received the submission of the rebellious Tassilo.

It was probably some time after this that Charles sent round to the Churches a homilary or collection of sermons, corrected by the hand of Paulus Diaconus (at that time probably engaged in teaching at Metz), accompanied by the following instructions:—

"Desirous as we are of improving the condition of the Churches, we impose upon ourselves the task of reviving with the utmost zeal the study of letters, well-nigh extinguished through the neglect of our ancestors. We charge all our subjects, as far as they may be able, to cultivate the liberal

arts, and we set them the example. We have already, God helping, carefully corrected the books of the Old and New Testaments, corrupted through the ignorance of transcribers. And inasmuch as the collection of homilies for the service at Nocturns was full of errors . . . we have willed that these same should be revised and corrected by Paul the Deacon, our well-beloved client; and he has presented us with readings adapted to every feast-day, carefully purged from error, and sufficing for a whole year."

Two years after the appearance of the famous capitulary of 787, Theodulphus, Bishop of Orleans, one of the Missi Dominici, and who appears to have succeeded Alcuin, on his retirement to Tours, as a kind of "minister of education," addressed a document to the clergy of his diocese, which appears to have been widely adopted in other dioceses, in which he describes study as "a means whereby the life of the righteous is ennobled, and the man himself fortified against temptation." In this, he requires his clergy to open schools in every town and village of his diocese, and to receive "the children of the faithful" for instruction, demanding in return no payment, though permitted to accept a gift spontaneously offered. Theodulphus himself was one of the cluster of learned men about the Frankish court. The library of his cathedral was famous for the number and beauty of the manuscripts he had gathered together. He has left us one monument at least which has in our days, in a

translation, obtained a new popularity—the hymn "Gloria Laus et Tibi Honor"—

> "All glory, laud, and honour
> To Thee, Redeemer, King," etc.

In the year 795, the abbacy of Tours became vacant. It was, perhaps, the wealthiest of all the preferments in the wide dominions of Charles. The Archbishop of Toledo, in a controversy with Alcuin, made it a subject of reproach, that as Abbot of Tours he was the master of 20,000 slaves—the serfs upon his wide domains.

Here Alcuin continued his labours as teacher. He sent some of his monks to England to bring back books for the abbey library. Scholars flocked to him from all parts of the Frankish dominions, and many from his native England. He continued to correspond with the king,* and continued to exercise a great influence on the literary progress of the kingdom.

He was immediately succeeded in the mastership of the Palatine school by Witzo, who had accompanied him from York; and he, after a short time by Fredegis, another scholar of York. But within about two years there arrived from Ireland two men, in secular learning and in the Sacred Scriptures incomparably learned,† named Clement and Albinus, and they seem to have eclipsed Alcuin and his disciples in the regard of Charles.

* Among his scholars of this period were Raban Maur, Haymo, and other eminent men of the next generation.

† The Monk of St. Gall, i. 1.

The scholars of the Celtic school seem indeed to have had some advantages over the scholars of the school of York. We have seen that Alcuin and his school walked along the narrow path of Augustinian theology and Roman tradition. The Celtic scholars were familiar with the Greek Fathers. Manuscripts of Origen and other Greek authors, written in the beautiful character distinctive of the Celtic school of caligraphy, long remained at Luxeuil, St. Gall, and Bobbio, the great foundations of Columbanus, which long maintained their Celtic traditions. They were, by temperament as well as by training, more speculative than the steady Saxons. Clement appears, also, to have had a greater acquaintance with natural science than Alcuin. In one of Charles's letters to Alcuin, we find that Clement had given some different explanation of astronomical phenomena from those which Alcuin had previously given. Charles expresses the hope that he will not be too proud to admit that he was wrong if he sees reason to think so. It is interesting to find Alcuin quoting, with reference to Clement, Virgil's story of Dares and Entellus, which Jerome had quoted when Augustine opened a controversy with him.* We find the influence of these new Celtic teachers opposed also by Theodulphus, Bishop of Orleans, and Benedict of Aniane, whose character and abilities gave great weight to his opinions on all

* "The Fathers for English Readers," S.P.C.K.: Jerome, p. 216; Augustine, p. 130.

theological questions. On the other hand, Clement and his companions, if viewed with suspicion at Tours, and in the cell by the Anianus, and at Orleans, would find sympathy and support in the great monastery of Luxeuil and in its daughter-house of St. Gall, which were among the most famous of the religious communities of the time. It is from the monk of St. Gall that we have several stories about Clement, one of which is worth transcribing, as an illustration of Charles's encouragement of learning among the young men of his court.

On his return from Italy (probably the expedition of A.D. 786–7), Charles called before him the youths who had been under Clement's instructions, and found those of the middle and lower class more advanced than those of the noble class. Charles, with gracious looks and kind words, encouraged the former to persevere in their studies, promising them noble sees and abbeys as their reward. Then he turned to the others, and thundering at them rather than speaking to them, he reproached them with trusting to their noble birth and riches and good looks, and neglecting his orders and their own glorification, postponing their studies to luxury and play, idleness and useless exercises. Lifting his august head and unconquered right hand to heaven, he swore, with his accustomed oath, by the King of Heaven, "I do not care much for your nobility and your good looks, though others admire you; be sure of this, that unless you speedily repair your

former negligence by diligent study, you shall never get any good from Charles." *

We return, for a moment, to our countryman Alcuin. The king invited him to accompany him in the journey to Rome, in which he received the Imperial crown and title, but ill health prevented the Abbot of Tours from being present with his master on that memorable occasion. The last two years of his life, his growing infirmities led him to devolve much of the business of his great and laborious position upon others, while he continued his devotions and his studies, and awaited his end. He had been accustomed to express a wish that he might depart this life on the festival of Pentecost; and so it came to pass. He died on the day of Pentecost, in the year A.D. 804.

The sense of the signal service rendered by Alcuin to his age must not lead us to exaggerate his merits or powers. He was a scholar, one of the foremost scholars of his age; and, through the wise and powerful patronage of Charles, he was instrumental in doing much for the revival of learning on the continent of Europe, when it had fallen to its lowest point of neglect. He was a vigorous upholder of the faith, and he exhibited the example of a pure and blameless life in the midst of a rude and licentious court. But, as a scholar, he had nothing of genius; he was merely the painstaking teacher of the traditions of his school. The plans for the extension of learning, of which

* Monk of St. Gall, i. 3.

he was a chief agent, were those of Charles. He left no work of genius, like Eginhard's Life, or Theodulphus's Hymn. There was no heroic spirit of self-devotion, like that of Columbanus or Boniface. He was in his place as master of the school of York; he might, like his predecessors in that office, have risen to be Archbishop of York; he accepted Charles's invitation to be master of his Palatine school, and he was recompensed with the abbacy of Tours.

Of Charles's own literary attainments it is difficult to speak. On one hand we are told that he spoke Latin fluently and forcibly, that he understood Greek, that he had an insatiable thirst for knowledge, and was industrious in its acquisition. The authorship of the hymn "Veni Creator Spiritus" is attributed to him. He ordered a collection to be made of the Teutonic ballads which had come down from old times. He was correcting the Latin version of the New Testament by reference to the Greek at the time of his death. Yet we are told that, not having learned the art of writing in youth, he in vain tried to acquire it in manhood, though he took persevering pains to do so. It is probably an error on our part to overlook the many evidences with which history supplies us, that a good memory and a strong understanding will enable a man to acquire an amount of knowledge and an intellectual training which we think unattainable by a man who does not possess our keys to learning—the arts of reading and writing.

CHAPTER XXIII.

THE ECCLESIASTICAL WORK OF CHARLES.

Charles's ecclesiastical policy—His Church patronage—Anecdotes—Policy towards the Roman See—The iconoclastic controversy—The Caroline Books—The theological tone of the age—The Adoptionist controversy—The Council of Frankfort—The history of the *Filioque*.

THE religious side of Charles's character is of the greatest interest in the study of his remarkable character as a whole, and his religious policy led to the most important and durable results of his reign.

He inherited an ecclesiastical policy from his father; the policy of regulating and strengthening the influence of the Church in his dominions as the chief agent of civilization, and a great means of binding the various elements of the empire into one; the policy of accepting the Bishop of Rome as the head of Western Christianity, with patriarchal authority over all its Churches.

We have seen that he required the bishops and abbots to maintain the sacred buildings in their

guardianship in good repair. The Domkirche at Aix is the principal ecclesiastical building which he himself erected. We have seen that he diligently attended the services of the Church, took great interest in the details of the service, and interfered personally in their conduct.

He seems to have taken completely into his own hands the nomination to all the bishoprics and abbeys, and, having a sincere desire for the efficiency of the Church, his appointments were usually good. We have no charges that he received presents from candidates for his patronage. Still, he allowed those about him to solicit patronage for their friends and dependents; and he sometimes selected his nominees in a way which savours of caprice. We will only relate one of the anecdotes of the monk of St. Gall in illustration of the subject.

On one occasion, when it was announced to him that one of the bishops had died, Charles asked whether, out of his goods or labours, he had sent anything before him ("utrum de rebus vel laboribus suis ante se præmitteret aliquam"). The messenger, apparently misunderstanding the question, and thinking the king asked how much the bishop had left behind him, answered, "Not more than two pounds of silver." A young clerk of the king's chapel, who happened to be standing by, muttered in a low tone to himself, "A small viaticum for so long a journey." Charles overheard, and said to him, "Do you think, if you received the see, you would take care to make better provision for that

long journey?" The clerk, swallowing the words like premature grapes falling into a gaping mouth, fell at his feet and said, "My lord, that depends on the will of God and your power." The king bade him stand behind the curtain which was behind his chair, and he would hear how many suitors he had for that honour. The news of the vacancy had become known in the palace, and there came a number of the courtiers begging for it for one man and for another. The Queen Hildegardis first sent a message, and then came herself, to beg for the vacant see for her own clerk; and the monk laughingly records the honeyed phrases with which the beautiful queen asked her boon of her mighty spouse: "Sweetest lord, my king, my glory and my refuge" ("Domine dulcissime, mi rex, gloria mea et refugium meum"). The clerk felt that his grapes were very likely to be intercepted before they could fall into his mouth, and said from behind the curtain, "Lord king, hold fast your courage, and let not any one wrest from your hands the power which God has entrusted to them" ("Domine rex, tene fortitudinem tuam, ne potestatem a Deo tibi collatam de manibus tuis quisquam extorqueat"). Then the most strong lover of truth (so he calls Charles) called the clerk out from behind the curtain before all, and said to him, "Take that see, and provide diligently that you send greater expenditure and a viaticum for the long and irrevocable journey before thyself and before me." *

* Lib. i. c. 4.

Charles's assumption of the patronage of the sees and abbeys of his dominions was indefensible in theory, submitted to because it could not be resisted, and made tolerable by appointments which were for the most part good. That it was considered an irregularity and a grievance, is shown by the fact that when Louis the Pious succeeded to the throne and published edicts for the better regulation of the discipline of the Church, he restored the right of canonical election.

The policy of Charles towards the see of Rome was a continuation of that already inaugurated by his father. He maintained the Bishop of Rome in the possession of the territories which Pepin had added to the endowments of the see, and even made some considerable additions to them from time to time. The Bishop of Rome held these possessions of his see on the same conditions as all the rest—the same conditions on which the bishops of Gaul held the landed endowments of their sees. He exercised a virtual lordship over them, subject to the sovereign authority. The authority of the bishop over the possessions of his see, is to be distinguished from the authority which he possessed as the most wealthy and powerful man in Rome, who had thereby attained to the political leadership of the *Respublica Romana*. Ultimately they became confounded. But when the Bishop of Rome accepted from Pepin the exarchate of Ravenna and the Pentapolis as endowments of his see, the

Roman Republic still continued to acknowledge the Eastern emperor as its sovereign. It was not until Leo placed the crown on the head of Charles, at the Christmas festival of 800, that the Roman Republic formally withdrew its allegiance from the Eastern emperor; and by the same act it acknowledged a similar sovereignty in the newly elected emperor of the West, and the pope and the magnates of Rome did homage to Charles as their political lord. It was when, under the successors of Charles, his empire fell in pieces, and each great division asserted its independence, that the bishops of Rome, like the rest, were able to assert a practical independence—still, however, subject in theory to Imperial rights, which a strong emperor, in some special conjuncture, from time to time found himself able to enforce.

From the edict of Leo the Isaurian (A.D. 724), the prohibition of images in the Eastern Church had been maintained by successive emperors, till the Council of Nicæa, 786, when the use and adoration of pictures (not statues) was restored, and the long schism which had existed on this subject between the East and West was terminated.

The Pope Adrian, on receiving the acts of the Nicene Council, communicated a copy to the Frankish Church, clearly anticipating that the decision of a so-called general council would be accepted by the Franks. But the Churches north of the Alps appear never to have fallen into the abuse of images, which had grown up in the Churches of the

East and of Italy. And the customs and convictions of these Churches made them unwilling to accept the decisions arrived at in the synod of Nicæa. Charles sent the decisions of the synod to Alcuin, who was then on a visit to England, and it is said that the English bishops joined in desiring their illustrious countryman to write against the council. Alcuin wrote some remarks, in the form of a letter to Charlemagne; others of the Frankish divines are said to have also written on the subject. Out of these writings grew a treatise in four books, known as the Caroline Books, because the king took a kind of editorial part in the compilation, and finally put the book forth in his own name. The tone of the book is firm and dignified. Great deference for the Apostolic See is professed, but the views of the Frankish Church are resolutely maintained,—that the use of images for the ornamentation of churches, and as historical memorials, is allowable and laudable, but that adoration of them is superstitious and to be forbidden. The views, both of the worshippers of images and of the breakers of images, are unsparingly criticized. Adrian sent a long reply to the king's book, but his arguments are feeble; his tone seems to show both a sense of the weakness of his cause and a fear of offending the king.

The general tendency of the theology of the age was to follow with implicit trust the system of doctrine which the genius of Augustine had recom-

mended to Latin Christendom. Gregory the Great is the chief link of transition between the period of the Fathers and the mediæval period, and he chiefly follows Augustine. Isidore of Seville (595–636), a large and intelligent contributor to the literature of Spain, in his theological writings transcribes Augustine and Gregory. Bede (672–735) has no theological originality; he follows the Fathers, and especially Augustine; Egbert of York, and Alcuin follow, without any originality of thought, the teaching of their school.

The great controversy, which disturbed the theological serenity of the age of Charles, sprang up in Spain, whose Church, though not oppressed by the dominant race, yet lay under such disadvantages that we should hardly have expected to find in it any exceptional originality of thought. Felix, Bishop of Urzel, a town on the south side of the Pyrences, in the country subject to the Frank monarchy, was the most able teacher of the new opinions; Elipandus, Archbishop of Toledo, the first see of the Spanish Church, was their most prominent and ardent partisan. The system of doctrine which Felix of Urzel taught seems to have had many points of likeness to that of the Antiochean school of the fifth century, which was condemned in the third general council at Ephesus. It may have been derived from a study of the Syrian writers of that time, such as Theodore of Mopsuestia; or Felix may have come to something of the same conclusions from approaching the sub-

ject of the divinity of Christ from the same side and in the same spirit—the spirit of rational inquiry, giving prominence to that which in the Person of Christ answers to the analogy of human nature. The general result was a sort of revived Nestorianism—a lowering down of the doctrine of Christ's divinity.* As in the Nestorian controversy the word *Theotokos* had been forced into undue importance, and taken as the keyword of the controversy, so now the phrases "*adopted son*" and "*adoption*" gave a title to the whole type of doctrine, and the controversy is known as the Adoptionist controversy.

The controversy was conducted with great acrimony in Spain, each side denouncing the other as unworthy of the name of Christian. From Spain it spread into the Frank Empire, disturbing the minds and unsettling the faith of many. Charles caused the question to be considered by an assembly convened at Regensburg, in the year A.D. 792. Felix of Urzel, his see being under the metropolitan jurisdiction of Narbonne, was cited to appear before the council. His doctrine was condemned, and he consented to a recantation. The king thereupon sent him to Rome, where his explanation was not considered satisfactory, and he consented to a further recantation. But on his return home he betook himself to the adjoining part of Spain, which was under the Moorish dominion, where he could express his real opinions

* Neander, "Church History," vol. v. p. 215, etc. Bohn's ed.

without fear of persecution, and withdrew his recantations. Upon this Elipand and other Spanish bishops wrote two letters, one to Charles and another to the Frankish bishops, defending Adoptionism; and they proposed a re-examination of the question, with a view to the reinstatement of Felix in his see. These letters the king sent to Pope Adrian for his information; but without waiting for any expression of opinion from him, he brought the matter before a council at Frankfort-on-the-Main, in August 15th, 794.

It was an assembly not unworthy to be compared with the earlier councils of the Western Church. Three hundred bishops were assembled, from Gaul, Germany, Lombardy, with some representatives of the English Church, and two legates from the Bishop of Rome. Alcuin was also admitted to a place, at the king's suggestion, on account of the service which his learning might be able to render. The meetings were held in the great hall of the palace. Charles, like Constantine at Nicæa, assisted at the council, and opened the proceedings with an address. Paulinus of Aquilæa, who was himself present, tells us "the venerable prince rose from his throne, and from the elevation of the dais he pronounced a long address upon the interests of religion which were in question. He concluded thus: 'It is for you to pronounce. Since the time, already far past, when the plague arose, its violence has not ceased to increase, and the contagion of the error has spread to the frontiers of my kingdom.

It is necessary, then, to take steps to suppress it, by a precise definition of the faith.'" Then some days were given to the assembled Fathers in which to give in their opinions in writing; and not one defender of Adoptionism was found among them.

The question of the worship of images was also laid before the assembly for its decision, and was dealt with in a way which showed that the council was no more disposed to be bound by the decisions of Rome than of Constantinople; for it endorsed, by a formal conciliar act, the views which Charles and the Frankish theologians had already set forth in the Caroline Books.

The decisions of the council were notified by Charles, or at least in his name, to the bishops of his own dominions, and to the Spanish bishops and others beyond his own kingdom.

The decision of the Council of Frankfort by no means at once restored peace to the Church. Other lesser councils repeated the condemnation of the Fathers of Frankfort; one at Friuli (796), and one at Rome (799). The controversy continued between Felix and Alcuin, and between Elipand and Alcuin. Leidrad, Archbishop of Lyons, Nefred, Bishop of Narbonne, and Benedict, Abbot of Aniane, were sent into the district which had been infected by the Adoptionist teaching, to preach and argue, and reclaim those who had been perverted; and it is said by Alcuin that, in the course of two such missionary journeys, they made twenty thousand

converts—bishops, clergy, and laity. Felix was induced to appear again before a council held at Aix, where Alcuin met him in a discussion which lasted six days, and Felix at last professed himself convinced by his adversary's arguments. But his former vacillations told against him now. He was not permitted to return to his diocese, but was committed to the care of the Archbishop of Lyons; and ultimately died in this kind of exile, leaving behind him papers which showed that it had not been an unnecessary precaution.

Another very important theological controversy of the reign of Charles is that on the question of the procession of the Holy Ghost.

The Council of Toledo, held under King Reccared, A.D. 589, at which the Visigothic Church of Spain formally abjured Arianism and adopted the orthodox faith, put forth a version of the great creed of Nicæa, in which they had interpolated an additional clause, which stated that the Holy Ghost proceeded from the Father "and from the Son" (*Filioque*). Under what influence the council took upon itself to make an addition to the creed of the universal Church is unknown. It is probable that the motive of the addition was to make a stronger protest against the Arian denial of the co-equal Godhead of the Son. The Spanish Church naturally took a special interest in the addition it had made to the symbol of Nicæa, and sustained it in subsequent councils. It became of special importance in the

Adoptionist controversy, when it afforded a weapon drawn out of their own armoury against the Spanish heresy. The Frankish Church seems to have early adopted it from their Spanish neighbours, since at the Council of Gentilly (A.D. 767), under Pepin, when ambassadors from the Greek Emperor Constantine Copronymus were present, both the question of images and this question of the *filioque* were discussed, as points of difference between the two Churches; but the details of the proceedings of that council have not come down to us.

The question was brought before a council held at Aix in A.D. 809, in the form of a complaint that some Frank pilgrims to the Holy Land, visiting the famous monastery of St. Saba, near Jerusalem, had been accused of being hereties on the ground of this interpolation in the Catholic Creed, and an attempt had been made to drive them away from the monastery. The council formally approved of the addition to the creed, and Charles sent two bishops and the Abbot of Corbie to Rome, to request the pope's concurrence in the decision. Leo, at a conference with the envoys, expressed his agreement with the doctrine, but strongly opposed its insertion into the creed. And it is said that he caused copies of the creed in its genuine form, in Greek and Latin, to be engraved on two silver shields, and set up in the basilica of St. Peter as a protest against any alteration. Notwithstanding the pope's protest, the addition was adopted throughout the Frankish Empire. When the Emperor Henry V. was crowned at

Rome, A.D. 1014, he induced Pope Benedict VIII. to allow the creed with the *filioque* to be chanted after the Gospel at High Mass; so it came to be generally used in Rome; and at length Pope Nicholas I. (858–867) insisted on its adoption throughout the West. At a later period the controversy was revived, and it became the ostensible ground of the final breach (A.D. 1054) between the Churches of the West and those of the East.* The growing opinion of the English Church of the present day probably is that Pope Leo III. was in the right; that though the doctrine is true, it was undesirable to insert it in the creed of the universal Church on any authority less than that of a general council.

Two curious features of the proceedings at Frankfort ought not to be omitted. Peter, Bishop of Verdun, who had been accused of participation in the conspiracy of Prince Pepin, was arraigned before the council. There was not sufficient proof to convict him, and he was allowed to prove his innocence if he could, after the Teutonic custom, by the oaths of conjurators—the oaths of two or three of his brother bishops, or of his metropolitan alone, that they believed him to be innocent. But they all declined to give this testimony. Then he offered to clear himself by another Teutonic custom, the appeal to "the judgment of God" by proxy. We are not told what the nature of the ordeal was, but his

* Mr. Ffoulkes, "The Church's Creed and the Crown's Creed."

"man" came safely through it, and the bishop was acquitted.

The Duke of Bavaria, dispossessed and sent to Jumièges six years before, was also brought before the council, and made to confess his treason, and to recognize the justice of his sentence, to surrender for himself and his family all his hereditary rights, and to commend his children to the mercy of the king. We can hardly doubt that this painful scene was submitted to by the unhappy duke under the coercion of threats and promises, and that its object was to extinguish in Bavaria the last hopes of a recovery of its autonomy. He was sent back to his cell, and this is the last time he or any of his dynasty, the oldest in Germany, appear on the stage of history.

CHAPTER XXIV.

THE END.

Policy of the emperor—Growing infirmities of Charles—He associates Louis with himself in the empire—Dies A.D. 814—His burial—Character.

THE accession of Charles to the Imperial dignity hardly made so much difference to himself personally, or to his empire, as we might have been disposed to expect. He had already grown gradually into empire, and had already played the part of emperor so long, that the addition of the title was rather a recognition of existing facts than the initiation of a new character and policy.

We have seen, indeed, that the solemn election to empire had, in his own mind, and in that of Christendom, given a new sanction to the position which he had won. But in all the external conduct of his personal life, and of his court, and in the policy of his reign, it made very little practical difference. He did not remove his residence from the banks of the Rhine; he did not introduce a new etiquette

into his court; he did not disturb the organization of his dominions. It adds much to our conception of the powerful character of the man, that he continued to the end to be the simple, straightforward Teuton he had always been.

But the circumstances of his realm did not now demand the same incessant activity from him; his increasing age made him more disposed to leave the hardships of war to his lieutenants; and the formal revival of the empire of the West in his person seems to have suggested to him that the remaining years of his life would be appropriately spent in promoting civilization, learning, and religion throughout the newly created empire.

Accordingly, we find that the last fourteen years of his life and reign are those in which he was most active in legislation. He did not, indeed, attempt to impose an Imperial code upon the whole of his subjects. With admirable good sense he resisted the temptation to theorize, and contented himself with trying to improve the several codes under which the various sections of his subjects had hitherto lived. The Catholic religion formed the great bond of union among the heterogeneous elements of the empire; and his steady patronage of the authority of the Roman See was, no doubt, partly due to his sagacious recognition of its political value. Learning is as cosmopolitan as Christianity, and in encouraging its spread among his subjects of all nations and all classes, he also saw clearly that he was strengthening one of the

most powerful bonds of Imperial union, and one of the most powerful agents of general progress.

Towards the end of this vigorous life, of this magnificent career, the great emperor was destined to experience, with so many men before and after him who have reached the very apex of earthly fortune, the short-livedness of human prosperity. If men live too long they outlive their powers, and their over-ripe fortunes begin to decay.

In less than two years death carried away out of his domestic circle his sister Gisela, his daughter Rothrada, his sons the two Pepins—the unhappy elder in his cloister exile, the promising younger in his Italian kingdom. Lastly, died his son Charles, his right hand, and the destined heir of his greatness, and Louis alone remained. But Louis, according to the testimony of Alcuin, and according to all the evidence of his own actions, was the worthiest of all the sons of Charles, and upon him all the hopes of the emperor and of the empire were now concentrated.

The health of the stalwart Teuton began to give way, as a result of half a century of hardships and labours. He was tortured with rheumatism, which lamed him in one foot; he was attacked with fits of fever. While bearing up bravely against increasing age and its infirmities, he did not neglect the warning to provide for the succession to the empire when death should at length remove him.

In the year A.D. 813, in the month of August, Charles summoned all the great men of the empire

to Aix, and with their concurrence he associated Louis with himself in the Imperial dignity. In a grand ceremonial in the basilica at Aix, he bade him take the diadem himself from the altar and place it on his own head, and caused him to be proclaimed Emperor and Augustus. We note the absence of any religious ceremonial or sanction; the nomination of the emperor, and the concurrence of the magnates of the empire, were Louis's earthly titles to the Imperial throne; the taking the crown from the altar and crowning himself symbolized that he received it "by the grace of God." In thus securing the succession to his son, the old emperor did not lay down his empire. On the contrary, he sent his son to Aquitaine, and continued his reign as heretofore. Eginhard tells us that, in spite of his age, in spite of his growing infirmities, the old Teuton still continued through the autumn his accustomed exercise of hunting in the forest of Ardennes, and only returned in November to pass the winter months in his palace at Aix.

We may take this opportunity to describe the general appearance of the city which was the real capital of the empire of Charles. Sir Emerson Tennant thus describes its general situation and appearance:—"On gaining the summit of a long hill, we suddenly looked down upon the turrets and domes of the venerable and Imperial city of Charlemagne, in the basin of a deep woody amphitheatre, which rises round it on all sides, covered with forest to the very top. No situation could be

imagined more charming, without anything very picturesque and magnificent."

He also describes the general appearance of the great church which Charles had erected there:—"The Domkirche, like some relic from the sea, encrusted with shells and parasites, is scarcely discernible in the midst of the coatings of modern buildings with which it is shut up and enveloped, a confused conglomeration of styles. But the central dome, the nucleus of the entire building, and that portion said to have been the emperor's tomb, still stands, erect and firm."

In January Charles was seized with a fever, which confined him to bed; but it is characteristic of the man that he despised the advice of the physicians, and would use no other than his accustomed method of self-treatment, which was to "starve" the fever. But his disease became complicated; pleurisy set in, and still persisting in his own mode of treatment, he died on the seventh day after he had taken to his bed, on the 5th of February, A.D. 814, in the seventy-second year of his age, and the forty-seventh of his reign.

In those days burial followed quickly upon death. But the burial of Charles was not to be like that of ordinary men. A great and beautifully carved sarcophagus of classical workmanship was lying empty in the basilica of Aix, but they did not enclose him within it. In the crypt beneath the dome of his great basilica they placed him; seated, as in life, in a great marble chair; ornamented with

bosses of gold, clad in his royal robes, with crown on head, and sceptre in hand, and the good sword "Joyeuse" girded to his side; the pilgrim's pouch, which he had worn in life in his pilgrimages to Rome hanging from his girdle, and on his knees a copy of the Gospels.* His feet only rested in the carved sarcophagus, as if the great emperor was not to be laid prone and enclosed from sight like ordinary mortals, but in death still to tread death underfoot.

On the stone beneath the dome, which closed the entrance to the tomb, was carved the following epitaph:—

"Sub hoc conditorio situm est corpus Karoli Magni atque Orthodoxi Imperatoris. Qui regnum Francorum nobiliter ampliavit, et per annos xlvii. feliciter rexit. Decessit septuagenarius, Anno Domini dccccxiii., Inditione vii., v. Kal. Febr." †

The huge black flagstone which now lies under the dome, with the inscription "Carolo Magno," is supposed to cover the entrance to the tomb. Over it hangs a large golden candelabrum, which the Emperor Barbarossa gave to burn above the grave. In the time of Barbarossa, and at his in-

* The Emperor Otho III. had the crypt opened two hundred years afterwards, and found his great predecessor as described in the text.

† "Beneath this tomb lies the body of Charles the Great and Orthodox Emperor; who gloriously extended the kingdom of the Franks, and ruled it fortunately for forty-seven years. He died in the seventieth year of his age, in the year of our Lord 813, the seventh year of the Indiction, the fifth of the Kalends of February."

stance, the Church enrolled the name of the great Emperor in its Kalendar as Saint Charlemagne.

Charles's is a character easily estimated. There was nothing creative in his genius. The lines on which he worked had already been laid down by his grandfather and his father; he had only to follow them out. He had a powerful, straightforward mind, which applied itself successfully to all the work which lay before it. He was a great general, a great statesman, a great organizer, because this was the work he had to do. His father had set the example of the cultivation of learning as a part of statesmanship; but Charles had a thirst for knowledge, and a love of literature, which form the most original part of his character. But the one trait which above all strikes the imagination, and stands out as especially characteristic, is the immense energy of body and mind, which made itself felt all over his vast empire, in every department of its affairs. Not sparing of blood, but not cruel. Imperious a man in such a position almost inevitably becomes, but he was not tyrannical. Originally of a large, frank, kindly nature, he indulged in the lax domestic morality which had been the custom of his ancestors. He was a man of immense powers, who found himself the inheritor of a great task, applied himself to it with all his might, and accomplished it successfully.

The empire he had created fell to pieces almost immediately, but his work was not therefore all

lost. It fell to pieces, but the pieces all bore the impress of Charles's hand; they did not fall back into barbarism, they advanced into civilization. The pieces of Charles's empire became the nations of mediæval and modern Europe.

And the idea of the empire survived, in a modified form, in the Holy Roman Empire of the Middle Ages. Napoleon aimed at reviving the Empire of Charlemagne under Gallic instead of Teutonic leadership. Prussia has succeeded in re-establishing such an Imperial union of the Germanic nations. The nations of Europe still need some international confederation—in default of Imperial organization—which could secure international peace, leave the energies of the peoples free to pursue the career of internal progress, and promote the general prosperity and happiness.

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A.D.

742. Birth of Charles.
769. Charles and Carloman succeed to the kingdom.
771. Charles alone.
772. Opening of the Saxon war; destruction of the Irminsul.
774. Fall of Pavia; Charles King of the Lombards.
778. Spanish expedition; defeat of Roncevaux.
782. Alcuin settles at Charles's court.
784–5. The great winter campaign, in which the power of the Saxons was broken; submission of Witikind.
787. Issue of the great chartulary on the revival of learning.
788. Tassilo deposed; Bavaria incorporated into the empire.
791. War against the Huns; invasion of Pannonia.
792. The conspiracy of Pepin *le Bossu*.
794. Council of Frankfort.
796. The Huns defeated, and the "Ring" taken.
797. End of the Saxon war; Saxony incorporated.
798. The Spanish conquest completed.
800. Charles elected emperor.
806. Louis appointed King of Aquitaine, and Pepin King of Italy.
813. Charles associates Louis in the empire.
814. Death of Charles.

THE END.

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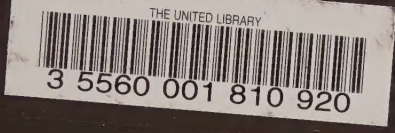
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